

Setting a Collective Vision for Youth Apprenticeship

Reflecting on Early Momentum to Plan for the Future

May 2024

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Dear Youth Apprenticeship Week Celebrants,

We are thrilled to extend a warm welcome to each one of you joining us today as we celebrate the first ever National Youth Apprenticeship Week. The Urban Institute, in collaboration with our fellow Youth Apprenticeship Intermediaries, ICF, JFF, and net.America welcome you to our event with thanks and excitement.

Today we've gathered sponsors, employers, educators, young people, intermediaries, and public officials to celebrate and learn from five years of the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary project and other investments to build and expand apprenticeships for both in-school and out-of-school youth.

You are at the heart of what makes this convening special. Your diverse backgrounds, expertise, and perspectives enrich the discussions and insights that will emerge throughout today's event. Together, we will explore emerging research, reflect on current practices, engage in thought-provoking discussions, and connect with youth apprenticeship enthusiasts as we look to the future of youth apprenticeship. We hope you find opportunities today to network with other participants as we build and grow a shared community investing the next chapter of youth apprenticeship.

A tight labor market and pressing need for skilled work across the United States has put the value of work-based learning for youth in focus. At this event, you will hear from youth apprentices, employers, and public officials, alongside researchers and practitioners as we elevate lessons learned from across the nation. Whether you are a seasoned professional or a newcomer to the field, there is something here for everyone, and we hope you will leave with new knowledge, inspiration, and lasting connections.

Thank you for adding your voice to today's event. We are excited to embark on this journey of discovery, growth, and innovation with you. Together, we will seize the momentum and foster a strong future for youth apprenticeship.

Warm regards,

The Urban Institute Apprenticeship Team

Convening Goals

SET LEARNING GOALS

My top learning goal for the convening is

The top question I want answered is

MAKE CONNECTIONS

I want to have connected with _____ people.

Specific experts I want to connect with include

ASK QUESTIONS

Three questions I want to explore in my breakout sessions are:

LESSONS LEARNED/TAKEAWAYS

What are three specific lessons learned/takeaways you want to further explore?

Agenda

9:00 – 10:00 AM	Registration, Breakfast, & Meet the Intermediaries <i>Food in Brookland Lobby</i>		
10:00 to 10:30 AM	Celebrating the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Project <i>Anacostia</i>		
10:30 – 11:15 AM	Elevating the Voice of Youth Apprentices <i>Anacostia</i>		
11:15 – 12:00 PM	Employers Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship <i>Anacostia</i>		
12:00 – 12:30 PM	Lunch Break <i>Lobby</i>		
12:30 – 1:15 PM	Lunch Keynote: Youth Apprenticeship at Scale: A Vision for Maryland <i>Bring your lunch into Anacostia and eat during remarks</i>		
1:15 to 2:15 PM	Breakout Sessions Choose One		
	Lessons for Serving in School Youth <i>Brookland</i>	Lessons for Serving Out of School Youth <i>Columbia Heights A</i>	Supporting a Future of Sustainability <i>Columbia Heights B</i>
2:15 to 2:45 PM	Networking Break & Refreshments <i>Lobby</i>		
2:45 to 3:30 PM	Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact <i>Anacostia</i>		
3:30 – 4:15 PM	What's Next for Youth Apprenticeship <i>Anacostia</i>		
4:15 – 4:30 PM	Closing Remarks <i>Anacostia</i>		

Session Descriptions

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.			
Breakfast, Networking, & Meet the Intermediaries			
<p>Ahead of our official events, please take a moment to learn about the work and findings from the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediaries. ICF, JFF, net.America, and the Urban Institute will each have representatives in the breakfast area and are looking forward to meeting attendees, sharing findings from the project, and answering questions around their work over the past five years on the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Project. You can also take the opportunity to get to know the other attendees and their youth apprenticeship efforts.</p>			
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.			
Celebrating the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Project			
<p>Start the day by celebrating the impact of the US Department of Labor’s initiative to expand registered youth apprenticeship through four Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary contracts. The Department of Labor will report on the apprenticeships created and participating employers in the context of past and future approaches to building apprenticeships for young people.</p>			
S P E A K E R S	<p>Robert Lerman <i>Institute Fellow</i> Urban Institute</p>	<p>Megan Baird <i>Deputy Administrator, Office of Apprenticeship</i> US Department of Labor</p>	
10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.			
Elevating the Voices of Youth Apprentices			
<p>The session will ground the day’s discussions by gleaning insight from the world of youth apprenticeship through the eyes of the apprentices themselves. We will also highlight case studies of youth apprenticeship programs from around the country.</p>			
S P E A K E R S	<p>Alexis Andrews <i>Cyber Security Support Technician,</i> Technically IT</p>	<p>Zach Boren <i>Senior Policy Program Manager</i> Urban Institute</p>	<p>Leslee Haisma <i>Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator</i> Urban Institute</p>
	<p>Emily Sohn <i>Manufacturing Apprentice</i> District 214</p>	<p>Coda Wear <i>Quality Technician Apprentice</i> PTA Plastics and CareerWise Colorado</p>	<p>Tyler Wright <i>Electrical Apprentice</i> Local 159 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and 1901 Inc.</p>

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Employers' Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship

Employers are essential to the delivery and growth of youth apprenticeships. This session looks at how intermediaries can stimulate employers to build programs and offer apprenticeships. Employers and sponsors then discuss what does and does not work, what they anticipated, and what surprised them in creating and sustaining apprenticeships.

SPEAKERS

Ashley Felton
Founder
Technically IT

Erik Halverson
Electrical Superintendent
1901 Inc.

James (Andy) McHaffie
Apprenticeship Coordinator
Fort Zumwalt School District,
Missouri

Robert Lerman
Institute Fellow
Urban Institute

Nicholas Wyman
Executive Director
The Institute for
Workplace Skills and
Innovation

12:00 – 1:15pm Lunch and Keynote

Youth Apprenticeship at Scale: A Vision for Maryland

Learn about how a Maryland political leader came to view youth apprenticeship as central to opportunity and productivity and how has put youth apprenticeship objectives become a key part of the laws enabling the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Maryland plan is to create sufficient youth apprenticeships (about 28,000 new slots per year) so that 45 percent of Maryland high school graduates will have completed the high school component of a registered apprenticeship by the 2030–2031 school year. State Senator Rosapepe will describe efforts under way to accomplish this objective, including efforts by public agencies, specific industries, and funding plans developed by the Maryland Apprenticeship 2030 Commission.

SPEAKERS

Robert Lerman
Institute Fellow
Urban Institute

James Rosapepe
State Senator
Maryland

1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Lessons for serving in-school youths

Registered apprenticeship programs for young people still enrolled in high school present their own opportunities and challenges. This interactive session will address the unique hesitations to creating high school-based apprenticeship programs, as well as the best practices within apprenticeship program design, to address both structural and student-centered needs.

SPEAKERS

Leslee Haisma
Training & Technical Assistance Coordinator
Urban Institute

Deborah Kobes
Senior Fellow
Urban Institute

Donna Worthem
Assistant Principal
Maryville Schools, Tennessee

Taylor White
Director of the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship
New America

1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Lessons for serving out-of-school youths

Out-of-school youths make up most youth apprentices and represent a diverse set of populations. This session will feature insights from organized labor and workforce system partners discussing various strategies for recruiting and retaining out-of-school youths and how the apprenticeship system can attract these groups of young people at scale. This session will provide attendees an opportunity to see how the partnerships between labor, employers, community-based organizations, government agencies, and registration agencies serve out-of-school youth.

SPEAKERS

John Colborn
Executive Director
Apprenticeships for America

Josh Stern
Membership Coordinator
Local 159, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Lindsey Tyson
Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator
Urban Institute

1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Supporting a Future of Sustainability

After a five-year investment to expand youth apprenticeship programs through the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary initiative, special attention is needed on how to maintain and sustain progress. This session will be an opportunity for stakeholders across the youth apprenticeship landscape to engage with each other and share ideas about what system investments, technical assistance, and other supports are needed to support better program sustainability outcomes.

SPEAKERS

Zach Boren
Senior Policy Program Manager
Urban Institute

Andrew Campbell
Policy Program Manager
Urban Institute

Mike Lawrence
Senior Workforce Director
ICF

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact

Completion rates across the registered apprenticeship system are low, including rates for youth apprentices. This session will address the barriers that affect retention, including specific challenges that may vary by apprentices' race and gender. The session will conclude with strategies to overcome these challenges and recommendations for expanding apprenticeships to create a more inclusive workforce.

SPEAKERS

Bhavani Arabandi
Principal Research Associate
Urban Institute

Pastor Randi Francis
President and Chief Executive Officer
Nehemiah Community Empowerment Center, Inc.

Dr. Lazaro Lopez
Associate Superintendent
Township High School District 214

Amanda Myers
Employment Coordinator
Down Syndrome Innovations

Shruti Nayak
Policy Analyst
Urban Institute

3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

What's Next for Youth Apprenticeship

Join a conversation with policymakers to discuss the potential for apprenticeship to further unlock career opportunities for young people. We will close the day learning about what comes next for youth apprenticeship and exploring long-term possibilities.




SPEAKERS

Deborah Kobes
Senior Fellow
Urban Institute

Megan Baird
Deputy Administrator,
Office of Apprenticeship
US Department of Labor

Catherine McConnell
Policy Advisor, OCTAE
US Department of Education

Speakers

	<p>Alexis Andrews, Cyber Security Support Technician <i>Technically IT</i></p> <p>Alexis Andrews is a cybersecurity apprentice at Technically IT, which is based in South Carolina and provides consulting and project management services to K-12, colleges, universities, and businesses in the private sector. As a youth apprentice, her training includes CompTIA's Advanced Security Practitioner (CASP+) Security +.</p> <p>Session Elevating the Voices of Youth Apprentices</p>
	<p>Bhavani Arabandi, Principal Research Associate <i>Urban Institute</i></p> <p>Bhavani Arabandi is a principal research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. She is a labor sociologist whose work focuses on enduring inequalities in the labor market, gender, apprenticeship, and international development. Her expertise is in program design and implementation, qualitative research, policy analysis, and technical assistance.</p> <p>Before joining the Urban Institute, Arabandi worked as a program analyst at the US Department of Labor. She was selected as a fiscal year 2020 CXO Fellow and received the secretary's award for outreach and training. Before joining the federal service, Arabandi was an academic with extensive experience at public and private universities. She was awarded the Fulbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Award in Teaching and Research and was a postdoctoral research fellow at Rice University. She has published in major journals and has received several awards for her research. Arabandi has a MA in sociology from George Mason University and a PhD in sociology from the University of Virginia.</p> <p>Session Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact</p>
	<p>Megan Baird, Deputy Administrator, Office of Apprenticeship <i>US Department of Labor</i></p> <p>Megan Baird serves as the Deputy Administrator in the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) at the US Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training administration (ETA). She has responsibility for oversight and activities related to OA's industry engagement, strategic partnerships, and investment activities. This includes providing leadership for over \$1 billion in investments as well as OA's engagement with industry, workforce, equity, labor, and education leaders across the private and public sectors to promote, establish, diversify, and expand the use of registered apprenticeship and ensure access to all.</p> <p>Prior to this role, she was the Program Manager for H-1B grant programs in ETA's Office of Workforce Investments. She is a proud graduate of Smith College with a bachelor's degree in Government.</p> <p>Session Celebrating the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Project & What's Next for Youth Apprenticeship</p>



Zach Boren, Senior Policy Program Manager

Urban Institute

Zach Boren is a senior policy program manager in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, where he leads various apprenticeship-focused projects, including youth apprenticeship, and is a technical expert on registered apprenticeship and equal employment opportunity. Before working at Urban, Boren spent 11 years with the US Department of Labor, where he was the director of registered apprenticeship and policy.

Boren worked with US Coast Guard on congressional affairs and on Capitol Hill. Boren was selected by the Aspen Institute as a Marano Fellow, participating in the Sector Skills Academy. Boren received a bachelor's in public affairs from Indiana University and a master's in congressional and presidential studies from the Catholic University of America.

Session | Elevating the Voices of Youth Apprentices & Supporting a Future of Sustainability



Andrew Campbell, Policy Program Manager

Urban Institute

Andrew Campbell is a policy program manager in the Research to Action Lab at the Urban Institute. He comes to Urban as a recent European Parliament Schuman Trainee for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the European Parliament Liaison Office with the US Congress. Campbell holds a BA in political science and international relations from the College of Wooster and an MPP from the University of Edinburgh, where he focused on education policy, workforce development, and youth unemployment.

Session | Supporting a Future of Sustainability



John Colborn, Executive Director

Apprenticeships for America

John Colborn is the Executive Director of Apprenticeships for America, a membership and advocacy organization working to expand apprenticeship in the United States. He has served as an employer sponsor and developer of apprenticeship programs in information technology, manufacturing, healthcare, and social services. John has amassed over 30 years of experience with community-based and national nonprofits, including serving as an education, workforce, and human services practitioner, Director of the Aspen Institute Skills for America's Future program, Vice President Operations at the Ford Foundation, and program manager at the Philadelphia-based Reinvestment Fund.

Session | Lessons for Serving Out-of-School Youths









Ashley Felton, Founder


Technically IT

Ashley Felton, Founder and Executive Chairman of SystemATECH, is spearheading global expansion and leading the charge to empower the global workforce with the in-demand digital skills that the cyber and digital industries demand.

SystemATECH is a global leader in providing training and education in information technology, cybersecurity, and other valuable digital and non-digital skills. With years of IT skills and cybersecurity technology education provider, SystemATECH partners with top-tier industries in the public and private sector to offer advanced, professionally developed programs in digital technology. SystemATECH's dedicated research and development team ensures all digital and cyber curricula remain relevant to current industry standards, aids students in developing the skill sets they need to acquire life-long careers in the STEM workforce and enables them to re-shape their path in life.

	<p>In another venture, Ashley Felton founded Technically IT. She built this company that designs, orchestrates, and manages customized services and solutions that help drive organizations big and small to succeed.</p> <p>Ashley Felton also is on the advisory board of many academic institutions locally in her area and assists colleges, and universities with retaining students and helping implement growth techniques. Ashley Felton leads with compassion and is transparent about putting people first. Her leadership has helped many individuals and businesses reach their highest potential.</p> <p>Session Employers' Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship</p>
	<p>Pastor Randi Francis, President and Chief Executive Officer <i>Nehemiah Community Empowerment Center, Inc.</i></p> <p>Randi Francis acquired an Associate Degree in Computer Science back in 1993. While at Monroe College, she received tutoring awards for helping students in their coursework. She worked for the Mayor's Office in the City of New York for four years. She was promoted to LAN administrator almost instantaneously. After not being selected for a promotion, she realized that she reached the glass ceiling. With her own funds, Randi started a youth program in the Bronx to keep the kids off the street. The City gave her the key to the park, buses and access to drivers to take the kids on field trips.</p> <p>Randi volunteered at a local non-profit helping with workforce development and basic computer training. After three months, she was hired as Program Director and received the Community Achievement Award for her efforts in educating low-income families in computers. In 1999, Randi and her family moved from the Bronx, NY looking for a better environment to raise her three children and the one that was on the way. Upon arriving in NC, she applied and received grant funding to attain her A+, Net+, MCSA & MCSE Certifications in 2002. Through her course of study and desire to give back, she developed a passionate interest in helping at-risk youth, teens and adults to attain STEM, Robotics and I.T. exposure and career exploration. In 2003, she started her own consulting business setting up computer camps at area parks & rec centers in the Greensboro area.</p> <p>Randi desires to engage more with influential decision-makers and leaders in workforce development and continue to adequately prepare others to flourish and succeed in the I.T. field. She is open to challenges, conversations, and an exchange of ideas from the top players in the business community. Her long-term goal is to implement a STEM and Vocational Academy for middle school students that can be easily duplicated nationwide. June 2021, Nehemiah moved into a 12,000 sq. foot facility and is implementing their community center that will evoke change in the surrounding communities.</p> <p>Session Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact</p>
	<p>Leslee Haisma, Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator <i>Urban Institute</i></p> <p>Leslee Haisma is a training and technical assistance coordinator in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, where she focuses on apprenticeships and workforce development. Her work focuses on building new occupational frameworks and helping organizations develop new apprenticeship programs. Before joining Urban, Haisma worked for 10 years in the Michigan public school system as a teacher and school administrator. Haisma holds an undergraduate degree in education from Grand Valley State University and a master's degree in urban education from Davenport University.</p> <p>Session Elevating the Voices of Youth Apprentices & Lessons for Serving In-School-Youths</p>

	<p>Erik Halverson, Electrical Superintendent <i>1901 Inc.</i></p> <p>Eric completed a registered apprenticeship as an electrical apprentice in Wisconsin. In addition to being a licensed electrician, Eric's role at 1901 Inc. includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide oversight for Field Foreman Recruit team members. Estimate and pursue additional client-based work. Manage electrical projects. Facilitate preconstruction and constructability. <p>Session Employers' Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship</p>
	<p>Deborah Kobes, Senior Fellow <i>Urban Institute</i></p> <p>Deborah Kobes is a senior fellow for apprenticeship and workforce in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, where she advances the expansion of diverse, inclusive, and high-quality registered apprenticeship programs and researches their impact on financial stability. Kobes has testified before Congress about youth apprenticeship programs, and she led numerous national workforce development initiatives. Before joining Urban, Kobes was the interim vice president for the Center for Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning at Jobs for the Future. She was the first employee of the Emerald Cities Collaborative, a research affiliate in the Community Innovators Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a Brookings Institution research fellow. Kobes received a BSE in civil engineering from Princeton University and a PhD in urban political economy and governance from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.</p> <p>Session Lessons for Serving In-School-Youths & What's Next for Youth Apprenticeship</p>
	<p>Mike Lawrence, Senior Workforce Director, Workforce Development <i>ICF</i></p> <p>Mike is a senior workforce director with nearly 45 years of experience in public workforce systems, including work-based learning, apprenticeships, and development. His experiences include community transformation through seamless implementation of workforce, economic, education and community development. Extensive experience in all areas of work-based learning. Successfully addresses community needs at national, regional, state, and local levels in multiple areas. Recognized as a talented team leader in managing complex relationships to achieve the desired outcomes. Manages variety of client and customer relations. Possess strong interpersonal skills, exceptional integrity and strong work ethic. Understands local, regional, and state contexts in addressing needs based on the interpretation of national and state priorities.</p> <p>Session Supporting a Future of Sustainability</p>
	<p>Robert Lerman, Senior Fellow <i>Urban Institute</i></p> <p>Robert Lerman is an Institute fellow in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, a professor emeritus of economics at American University, chair of Apprenticeships for America, and a research fellow at IZA in Bonn, Germany. A leading expert on apprenticeship, he recently established the American Institute for Innovative Apprenticeship. His current research focus is on skills, employer training, apprenticeship programs in the United States and abroad, and housing policies.</p> <p>Lerman's published research covers employment issues, earnings and income inequality, family structure, income support, and youth development, especially as they affect low-income populations. In the 1970s, he worked as staff economist for both the Congressional Joint Economic Committee and the US Department of Labor. He was one of</p>

	<p>the first scholars to examine the patterns and economic determinants of unwed fatherhood and to propose a youth apprenticeship strategy in the United States.</p> <p>He served on the National Academy of Sciences panel on the US postsecondary education and training system and on the Maryland Task Force on Economic Development and Apprenticeship. Lerman has testified before congressional committees on youth apprenticeship, child support policies, and the information technology labor market.</p> <p>Lerman earned his AB at Brandeis University and his PhD in economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.</p> <p>Session Celebrating the Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary Project, Employers' Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship, & Youth Apprenticeship at Scale: A Vision for Maryland</p>
	<p>Dr. Lazaro Lopez, Associate Superintendent <i>Township High School District 214</i></p> <p>Dr. Lazaro Lopez serves as Chair of the Illinois Community College Board, Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning at High School District 214, and Youth Apprenticeship Chair for the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board. Dr. Lopez has been featured in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Profiles of Change and Achieving Tomorrow series and recognized as the Illinois Principal of the Year for his tenure as Principal of Wheeling High School.</p> <p>Lopez has prioritized the state's community college agency on the seamless transition of students, workforce development, and institutional effectiveness. As Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning at High School District 214 in Arlington Heights, IL, Dr. Lopez oversees all academic programs serving over 12,000 students at six comprehensive high schools, each one recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of "America's Best High Schools." High School District 214 has led the national Redefining Ready campaign acknowledging students' need to graduate high school with a path to economic mobility. As a result, all students at District 214 identify a career pathway of interest, participate in as many as 3,000 work-based learning experiences annually, and more than 85% of graduates complete early college general education and career-related coursework.</p> <p>Dr. Lopez has served as an adjunct faculty member in the graduate educational leadership program at Roosevelt University and the education doctoral program at Aurora University.</p> <p>He speaks statewide and nationally as an advocate for relevancy in schools, business partnerships, and career pathways. Prior to his leadership in education, Dr. Lopez served as a training non-commissioned officer in the U.S. Army, a small-business owner, and a corporate trainer. Dr. Lopez earned his Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Aurora University (2010), a Master of Arts Degree in Educational Administration from Roosevelt University (2004), and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Communication and English from Illinois State University (1998).</p> <p>Session Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact</p>



Catherine McConnell, Policy Advisor, OCTAE

US Department of Education

Catherine recently served as the Director of Strategic Initiatives at Rhode Island's Office of Postsecondary Commissioner. Prior to that role, she served as the Education Policy Advisor to Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo where she oversaw policies and programming that spanned the K-12, postsecondary, and workforce space, working on programs ranging from the coordination between the systems to ensure all students are college and career ready to supporting youth mental health. During the COVID response, she coordinated the efforts to equitably and safely reopen childcare, summer camp, K-12 schools, and higher education institutions in Rhode Island, coordinating across all of state government. Catherine was a classroom teacher, working as a 4th and 5th grade teacher in a low-income area of Dorchester Massachusetts and a Special Education teacher in Washington, DC. She received her bachelor's from Brandeis University, Master of Special Education from George Mason University, and Master of Education Policy from Harvard's Graduate School of Education.

Session | What's Next for Youth Apprenticeship



James (Andy) McHaffie, Apprenticeship Coordinator

Fort Zumwalt School District 214

Introducing Andy McHaffie, a dedicated educator with 27 years of teaching experience, currently serving as the Apprenticeship and Curriculum Coordinator for the Fort Zumwalt School District. Andy's unwavering passion lies in guiding students towards promising career paths in high-demand industries. In 2019, Andy initiated the Fort Zumwalt Apprenticeship Program, which has since grown to encompass over 45 apprentices across 16 business partnerships spanning manufacturing, IT, and healthcare. Andy firmly believes that apprenticeships are the key to addressing the prevailing workforce shortage, and he is resolutely committed to discovering avenues for students to excel in skilled labor professions. He is unwavering in his commitment to establishing clear paths for students in the realm of skilled labor. Furthermore, Andy is deeply enthusiastic about enlightening students about the manifold rewards and prospects that skilled labor careers offer.

Session | Employers' Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship







Amanda Myers, Employment Coordinator

Down Syndrome Innovations

Amanda joined Down Syndrome Innovations in 2021 and has more than a decade of experience supporting individuals with diverse abilities. Amanda began her career as a Case Manager for families at a community mental health center in Kansas where she was awarded Employee of the Year. Following this, she relocated to Vancouver, British Columbia where she worked as an Employment Specialist for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Amanda came to Down Syndrome Innovations to build an employment program to address the staffing needs in the community, train employers, and advance hiring and onboarding systems. Amanda and her team have developed several employment services to help individuals throughout their entire employment journey, ranging from prevocational skill development to competitive integrated employment, while assisting employers throughout the process.

Session | Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact

	<p>Shruti Nayak, Policy Analyst <i>Urban Institute</i></p> <p>Shruti Nayak is a policy analyst in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, where she focuses on apprenticeships and workforce development. Nayak was awarded for her undergraduate thesis work on improving deliberative forums between members of Congress and their constituents. Before joining Urban, she interned at the Brookings Institution in the Governance Studies program. Nayak graduated summa cum laude with honors from the Ohio State University, earning a BA in political science and public policy analysis.</p> <p>Session Maximizing Youth Retention for Equitable Impact</p>
	<p>James Rosapepe, State Senator <i>Maryland</i></p> <p>Maryland State Senator Jim Rosapepe is a leading champion of scaling up Registered Apprenticeships starting in high school across occupations in his state and nationally. Vice Chair of the Senate Budget and Tax Committee, he is the author of the law setting a goal of 45% of Maryland high school graduates completing the high school level of a Registered Apprenticeship by 2031. With Bob Lerman and Ryan Craig, he is a founding board member of Apprenticeship for America.</p> <p>Session Youth Apprenticeship at Scale: A Vision for Maryland</p>
	<p>Emily Sohn, Manufacturing Apprentice <i>Township High School District 214</i></p> <p>Emily is a senior at John Hersey High School and a youth apprentice at DEMGY Chicago, a custom injection molder and mold builder for Aerospace, Medical, and Industrial applications. Sohn has been trained in Machine Tech, Tooling, Supply Chain Management, Quality Control, and Shipping. She has researched brighter and more cost effective lighting for the production floor. After high school, she plans on continuing her manufacturing education at Harper College. She is a 2024 finalist for the Outstanding Manufacturing Student Award from the Greater Chicago Advanced Manufacturing Partnership.</p> <p>Session Elevating Youth Voices of Youth Apprentices</p>
	<p>Josh Stern, Membership Coordinator <i>International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers</i></p> <p>Josh Stern works in membership development for International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 159 doing outreach to anyone interested in learning more about a career in electrical construction with the IBEW. Ranging from middle-schoolers to master electricians. He started his career as apprentice in 2012 after graduating from high school in New Glarus Wisconsin. After completing a 5 year apprenticeship with Local 159 he worked another 5 years in the field as a Journeyman Electrician before moving into his current role in membership development.</p> <p>Session Lessons for Serving Out-of-School Youths</p>



Lindsey Tyson, Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator
Urban Institute

Lindsey Tyson is a training and technical assistance coordinator in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Her work and research are largely centered around apprenticeship-based projects. Tyson's work focuses on building new occupational frameworks, helping employers navigate apprenticeship registration, and emphasizing the effectiveness of apprenticeship as a tool for greater workforce development. Before joining Urban, Tyson was an apprenticeship training representative for the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Tyson holds a bachelor's degree in international studies from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and is enrolled in the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations pursuing a master's degree in labor and employment relations.

Session | Lessons for Serving Out-of-School Youths



Coda Wear, Quality Technician Apprentice
PTA Plastics & CarrerWise Colorado

Coda is an apprentice with PTA Plastics as a Manufacturing Quality Technician. His current job duties include following measurement procedures to collect quality data on customer products, design Gage RnRs to test measurement methods, and assist in First Article Inspection Reports on customer products. He is also currently attending Front Range Community College to study Electrical Engineering and is set to complete his apprenticeship in January 2025

Session | Elevating the Voices of Youth Apprentices



Taylor White, National Director to Advance Youth Apprenticeship
New America

Taylor White is the director of postsecondary pathways for youth at New America's Center on Education and Labor, which focuses on policies and programmatic innovations designed to strengthen the link between education and economic opportunity. In this role she oversees a range of research and technical assistance activities, including the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA), a national field-building initiative she has directed since 2020. White serves as an advisor to several national and regional education and workforce initiatives, and in 2024 was appointed by Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Julie Su to serve on the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. A resident of Washington, DC, White also serves on the Mayor's Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee.

Session | Lessons for Serving In-School Youths



Donna Worthem, Assistant Principal
Maryville Schools

Donna Worthem is an Assistant Principal and Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator at Maryville High School in Maryville, Tennessee. Her areas of expertise include Career and Technical Education and student advisement. Her primary focus is guiding students to develop college and career plans aligned with their lifestyle goals. Currently, she is in the research phase of a dissertation titled Youth Apprenticeship as a Pathway to Career: Leveraging Community Social Capital for Workforce Development.

Session | Lessons for Serving In-School Youths



Tyler Wright, Electrician Apprentice

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and 1901 Inc.

Tyler Wright attends Madison Area Technical College. He is an electrical apprentice for 1901 Inc., a mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection contractor in Wisconsin with customers across the Midwest. His work includes installing electrical systems in commercial building. His apprenticeship is set to complete in 2027.

Session | Elevating the Voices of Youth Apprentices



Nicholas Wyman, Executive Director

The Institute for Workplace Skills and Innovation (IWSI)

Nicholas Wyman is a workforce development and skills expert, author, speaker, and CEO of the Institute for Workplace Skills and Innovation. Nicholas is a leader in developing skills-building, mentorship and apprenticeship programs that close the gap between education and careers around the world. His book JOB U is a practical guide to finding wealth and success by developing the skills companies actually need. Nick has innovated market-driven solutions to address the long-term workforce issues faced by employers, education institutions and governments. A third-generation writer, Nicholas began his own career by learning a trade. He was named Australian Apprentice of the Year in 1988 and went on to captain Australia's gold medal-winning Culinary Youth Team. He is a regular contributor to Forbes writing about job skills and training in the 21st-century workplace. He has an MBA and has studied at Harvard Business School and the Kennedy School of Government and was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2012. In 2015 Nick was named the #1 Education Writer of the Year on LinkedIn and in 2021 received an award from Advance International for his social impact.

Session | Employers' Strategies to Propel Youth Apprenticeship



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