AFA E-Digest: February 20th, 2024

Register Now: 2024 AFA Summit

Please join Apprenticeships for America on March 12th and 13th for the 2024 AFA Summit on the campus of historic Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. We offer you the opportunity to learn, share, advocate and network from and with your colleagues and other experts in the field.

Agenda for the Summit:
The agenda for the 20224 Apprenticeships for America Summit is now available! We know that a number of interested friends and colleagues have been waiting for the agenda before committing to registration. We think this information will be helpful. Visit the 2024 AFA Summit website and click on the agenda button at the top of the page.

Summit Registration and AFA Membership:
A reminder that members will receive a $100 discount on registration. Membership is free, quick and easy. Simply answer our 4-question survey. After you submit your response, you will receive a confirmation email with a member discount code for the Summit. Then, register here.

Location and Lodging:
The Summit will be held at the Kellogg Conference Center on the historic campus of Gallaudet University.

There is lodging on-site, and AFA has arranged a room block for the Summit with a discounted rate. To book a room at the hotel, please click here. The last day to secure a room within the discounted block is Saturday, February 23rd, so be sure to reserve your accommodations before then to secure your spot.
Questions?
If you have questions, you can reach René at AFA at 
rene.bryce-laporte@apprenticeshipsforamerica.org.

Members in the News

Dren LaPhayne, a high school graduate struggling to enter the tech field, found hope through a no-cost boot camp and apprenticeship program by Multiverse and Northwell Health, proving that apprenticeships can provide valuable opportunities for minorities and those without traditional degrees, addressing the growing demand for tech talent in cities like Tulsa.

Apprenticeships in the News

State Initiatives and Investments.
Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) launches $10 million Texas Industry Recognized Apprenticeship (TIRA) grant program, aimed at addressing workforce needs by supporting apprenticeships in 25 key occupations, including nurses, electricians, and truck drivers. Employers encouraged to apply by June 1 for funding consideration.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has announced $5 million in grants to expand apprenticeships, training 1,000 new apprentices in industries like healthcare, manufacturing, and early childhood education, aiming to enhance economic mobility and workforce competitiveness in Massachusetts.

California is fueling economic growth through diverse apprenticeship opportunities, with $75 million in funding now available to expand programs into new industries, including healthcare, transportation, and advanced manufacturing, offering accessible career pathways for all Californians.

New Jersey lawmakers are considering a bill to waive tuition fees for apprenticeship courses, potentially making them free for most students. This bipartisan initiative aims to empower individuals, remove financial barriers, and
promote workforce development, addressing the increasing demand for skilled workers in the state.

**Industry-Specific Apprenticeship Developments**

*Competency-based semiconductor apprenticeship programs, bolstered by government initiatives like the CHIPS Act*, offer a solution to the talent shortage in the chip industry. With a focus on hands-on training and classroom instruction, these programs provide transferable skills, federally-recognized credentials, and opportunities for diverse talent, addressing the growing demand for skilled workers in semiconductor manufacturing.

*The Biden-Harris Administration makes a groundbreaking $5 billion investment in semiconductor research*, development, and workforce initiatives. Through the CHIPS and Science Act, this historic funding aims to bolster U.S. leadership in semiconductor innovation, advance cutting-edge technologies, and create pathways to high-quality semiconductor jobs, ensuring America remains at the forefront of the global economy.

**Federal and Other Legislative Developments**

*The Biden-Harris Administration hosts its inaugural Interagency Youth Policy Summit, "Cultivating Possibilities,"* gathering young voices nationwide to shape policies ensuring opportunities for all youth. Discussions spanned from education to mental health, culminating in commitments like the U.S. Department of Labor's Youth Apprentice Pathway Pilot, signaling a collaborative effort to empower youth and enhance their access to quality career pathways.

*The bipartisan PATH Act*, spearheaded by U.S. Reps. Fitzpatrick and Norcross, aims to enhance apprenticeship opportunities in the building and construction trades. This legislation is designed to cultivate a highly skilled workforce by supporting the development of pre-apprenticeship programs tailored to the needs of underrepresented populations, fostering economic growth and strengthening communities.
The proposed apprenticeship rule making by the Department of Labor continues to draw a range of responses. In addition to the op-ed appearing in The Hill by AFA's Robert Lerhman, a column in the Alabama Daily News criticized what it calls a "compliance first" approach in the rules. You can read the full column here.