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Preface

Achieving the Dream (ATD) has a mission of helping low-income students achieve the goals of academic success and we recognize the importance of leveraging as many resources as possible to assist as many students as possible in reaching their goals. This funding guide, a product of ATD’s Community College Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways Initiative, was created as a resource for community colleges to assist students in accessing available funding opportunities as they pursue career pathways in advanced manufacturing, increasing the likelihood they will complete their studies and earn their postsecondary credentials. While colleges and students have many resources available on how to access federal financial aid, information on what is available from other varied sources is hard to find, especially for careers in advanced manufacturing. This guide describes these sources, ranging from federal agencies, such as the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services, to employer-sponsored programs, such as internships and apprenticeships, and more.

The Funding Guide for Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways can be used in conjunction with two other guides that emerged from the Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways Initiative: Career Pathways in Advanced Manufacturing and Building Sustainable and Strategic Partnerships with Business and Industry: A Step-by-Step Guide for Community Colleges. Taken together, they provide a comprehensive set of actions to enhance colleges’ implementation of career pathways and the building of a pipeline of workers to address the talent shortage in the advanced manufacturing industry.

Career pathways show great promise for helping students realize and achieve their dreams. Colleges with other types of career pathways may also find value in this publication and can customize the action steps to their specific programs.

Dr. Karen A. Stout
President and CEO, Achieving the Dream
Executive Summary

This is a practical guide to the federal and non-federal sources of funding available to community college students who are enrolled in advanced manufacturing career pathways. It starts with an overview of federal programs and includes action steps for colleges to take as they assist students in gaining access to funds and services. These programs include:

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):** Programs administered under WIOA provide access to education, training, and support services to prepare students to succeed in high-demand industries in their local areas.

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** Some states, but not all, allow use of TANF funds to pay for career pathways components.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T):** States can fund training and related support services to individuals receiving SNAP benefits.

- **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA):** Workers who have lost their jobs due to international trade policy can use TAA funds to obtain the skills, resources, and support they need to find new jobs or careers.

- **GI Bill:** A variety of programs for qualifying service members, veterans, and their families that can pay for tuition, housing, books and supplies, and some certifications and apprenticeships.

The second section focuses on employer-sponsored programs, including:

- **Internships:** Paid internships provide students with direct funding to support their completion of career pathways and the opportunity to develop technical and workplace skills.

- **Apprenticeships:** Students enrolled in advanced manufacturing career pathways may qualify for apprenticeships that are required for entry-level employment or career advancement. This description also defines “Registered Apprenticeship” as the term is used in WIOA.

- **Tuition Reimbursement:** Since the majority of community college students have jobs, some may be eligible for employer tuition reimbursement, especially when their employer is a local advanced manufacturer.

Finally, this guide describes other funding sources, including scholarships, financial products, and services through ATD’s Working Students Success Network (WSSN), and support from community-based organizations.
Introduction

Achieving the Dream’s (ATD) Community College Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways Initiative, funded by the Arconic Foundation, was designed to improve industry-college collaboration and to strengthen the advanced manufacturing workforce pipeline. It brings together ATD network colleges Muskegon Community College (MI), Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) (OH), and Westmoreland County Community College (PA), in partnership with employers, local workforce boards, and other key stakeholders. The initiative began in November 2016 with three regional convenings during which partners discussed the current state of education and training for advanced manufacturing, strengths to build on, challenges to overcome, and priorities for their regions. One challenge they identified was the need to better assist students with accessing federal funding. As part of the initiative, ATD conducted research on federal funding as well as other funding sources students in advanced manufacturing career pathways could use. This publication presents what we learned. As part of the initiative, ATD also examined best practices around employer engagement and advanced manufacturing career pathways and documented its findings in two publications:

► Building Sustainable and Strategic Partnerships with Business and Industry: A Step-by-Step Guide for Community Colleges provides action steps designed to support community colleges working to expand their partnerships with business and industry and looking for new approaches to achieving deeper and more sustained commitment from employers.

► Career Pathways in Advanced Manufacturing is intended to assist community colleges in strengthening advanced manufacturing career pathways by defining key characteristics and components of career pathways, outlining specific action steps to implement them, and offering practical examples from the three colleges participating in the Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways Initiative.

How to Use this Funding Guide

Colleges should read Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways first to absorb a detailed description of the components of pathways programs, then turn to this guide for its focus on how career pathways education is funded and where students can look for help in paying for career pathways credentials and degrees. The goal is to build awareness beyond federal student financial aid sources, such as federal grants, loans, and work-study programs, with which community colleges are already familiar. This guide dives into other sources that are a good match for funding career pathway programs and that are available specifically in the advanced manufacturing industry.

Each section of this guide describes the sources and provides action steps colleges can take to ensure that the college and its students are in a position to apply for and make use of the funds.
Federal Programs

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 is the largest and most relevant federal law related to career pathways. It is designed specifically to prepare workers for the 21st century workforce while helping businesses find the skilled employees they need to compete in the global economy. The first legislative reform of the workforce development system in 15 years, the law combines, updates, and aligns programs under the U.S. Department of Labor that historically have been spread among several government agencies.

WIOA brings together and strategically coordinates these core programs of federal investment in skill development:

- Employment and training services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth and employment services administered by the Department of Labor through formula grants to states; and
- Adult education and literacy programs and vocational rehabilitation state grant programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education that assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment.¹

WIOA authorizes local workforce development boards to coordinate and align workforce programs by working with local businesses and industry and education providers. It creates new opportunities for community colleges to strengthen and expand their career training programs and for students to qualify for tuition benefits and other supports that help them to prepare for high-demand careers in their communities.

There are two significant concepts or terms in WIOA that are important for community colleges, and that did not appear in the earlier Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The first is “career pathways,” the education-industry designed strategy around which WIOA implementation is built. WIOA provides a lengthy definition of career pathways, but for the purposes of this guide, the new definition addresses funding for postsecondary education as well as career counseling, work experiences, and other mechanisms that support career pathways.

The second term is “industry-recognized postsecondary credentials,” which defines the parameters for the training colleges must offer to ensure students earn credentials that meet employer needs. For students to gain access to WIOA funds through the workforce system, the postsecondary credentials they are pursuing must be “industry-recognized.” The training must focus on career pathways in the high-demand industries that local workforce development boards have identified. In addition, the institutions that administer the credentials must qualify to be included

For students to gain access to WIOA funds through the workforce system, the postsecondary credentials they are pursuing must be “industry-recognized.”
on the local workforce agency’s approved Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List. Community colleges can gain this status through the steps outlined later in this section. Given these requirements, partnerships between employers, education institutions, and the workforce system are necessary to ensure students have access to WIOA benefits and other supports while they are in school.

Titles I and IV of the WIOA target the following populations:

**Adults.** Individuals over the age of 18 who are low income or are lacking basic skills.

**Dislocated workers.** Individuals over the age of 18 who have been laid off or terminated; are self-employed but unemployed or are underemployed due to general economic conditions; are the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who is either a displaced homemaker or is unemployed due to relocating for a permanent change in duty; or are displaced homemakers.

**Out of-school youth.** Individuals who are 16- to 24-years-old and not employed or in school.

**People with disabilities.** Title IV of the act deals with vocational rehabilitation and covers individuals with disabilities who have substantial employment barriers. Provisions vary by state.

There are specific eligibility guidelines for each population. More information can be found on the Department of Labor’s web site at https://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/.

Under WIOA, students or prospective students must access funding through their local American Job Centers. These centers may go by a different name, but are part of a system of 2,500 local one-stop shops across the country authorized to offer training, referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services. Each center has counselors who provide the best way for students to learn if they are eligible for WIOA funding and to navigate the system. Upon qualifying, individuals can select from the ETP List a college or training provider that offers the career pathway the individual has decided to pursue. The state uses WIOA funds to help pay for the cost of their training, up to a locally determined amount.

Making use of WIOA funds does not disqualify students from applying for Pell Grants to help cover tuition costs above WIOA limits or for student loans, to help pay for other expenses.

**How to Become an Eligible Training Provider**

**Step 1:** Complete the online application available on your local American Job Center (also called Career One Stop Center) web site.

The WIOA requires each state to establish the criteria and procedures for becoming an ETP. The state governor’s office delegates the management of this process to the local workforce development board, which coordinates and aligns workforce programs and oversees the American Job Centers in the region. The centers maintain a web site with the application and details about how to become an ETP along with the application.

**Step 2:** Once approved as an ETP, promote advanced manufacturing career pathway opportunities to current and prospective students.

It’s important to get the word out to current and potential students about the college’s status as an ETP, and specifically, the advanced manufacturing career pathways programs that qualify for WIOA funding. The best way to do this is through the local American Job Center, where potential students must meet with career counselors who help them explore career options, navigate WIOA benefits, and set up WIOA-funded individual training accounts (ITAs) to pay for tuition, books, supplies, and equipment.
Each local workforce development board determines the amount of funding and length of time students can use their ITAs.

Community colleges also may be able to apply to enter into a contract arrangement for groups of students, if there is a local need for the specific pathway program and there are few other ETPs available locally to offer it.

**Step 3: Collect documentation for the required annual performance reports.**

While reporting requirements vary by state, there are some standard data points on which all ETPs are required to report in their annual performance reports. Most of the statistics will be easy to gather, but there are a few types of data that are challenging for community colleges to collect since they most likely do not have ready access to this data, for example, earnings and employment data for both WIOA and non-WIOA students. Therefore, start the process of locating this information early. A list of data elements and definitions for ETPs is available at: [https://www.doleta.gov/performance/guidance/tools_commonmeasures.cfm](https://www.doleta.gov/performance/guidance/tools_commonmeasures.cfm). The reporting template to use is available from your local American Job Center.

**Staying Connected to Local Workforce Development Boards and American Job Centers**

Even after gaining ETP designation, colleges must work at maintaining a strong relationship with their workforce development board and American Job Center so students and prospective students can continue to take advantage of WIOA funding. The board decides how to use WIOA funds and the amount of money to make available to students. The jobs center administers the outlay.

**Step 1:** Find the workforce development board in your local area.

A workforce development board locator is available on the U.S. Department of Labor web site at [https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/WorkforceDevelopment/find-workforce-development-boards.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/WorkforceDevelopment/find-workforce-development-boards.aspx). That will lead you to the local board’s web site.

**Step 2:** Review the workforce development board’s strategic plan.

Use the plan as a starting point to learn more about which regional high-demand industries it has identified and how it is setting WIOA funding policies and procedures.

**Step 3:** Attend a local workforce development board meeting.

Use the meeting to connect with board members and learn more about local priorities and how to get involved. Be sure to introduce yourself to the head of the American Job Center, since that individual is responsible for overseeing WIOA implementation directed by the workforce development board.

**Step 4:** Invite the head of the American Job Center to meet with students and student services staff on campus.

Not only does this allow you to build the relationship and present your campus, the representative can explain how WIOA funding works and distribute informational materials.

**Additional WIOA Funded Student Benefits**

Students who qualify under WIOA may also receive additional services that can support them while they are completing their career pathway credential. The support services provided in each local area varies and for the most part are accessible through the local American Job Center.

**Career Services:** WIOA-eligible students have access to career services available only at the center, including career assessments and career counseling.
Work-based Learning: Under WIOA, local employers can partially fund a variety of work-based learning experiences related to the chosen career pathways for adult and dislocated workers. These include pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training. The employer pays the student and is reimbursed for a percentage (typically 50 percent but up to 75 percent) of the WIOA-qualifying students’ wages. How this is implemented will vary locally, so again, it is essential for colleges to be engaged with local employers and the workforce system.

Support Services: Through the center, students may benefit from WIOA-funded support services, such as child care, transportation, mentoring, and case management. Funding for these services is determined locally, as is required by the WIOA legislation, and students need to work closely with their career counselors to access these services.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

TANF provides support for low-income families to help them achieve self-sufficiency. While somewhat unusual, a few states have connected TANF benefits to WIOA funding. A report on this practice is available from the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), the National Skills Coalition, and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities at https://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/publications/file/2015-06-Aligned-by-Design-WIOA-and-TANF.pdf.

Step for colleges: Contact your state Department of Health and Human Services to determine if TANF funds are available to pay for any of the career pathways components.

If that’s the case, counselors, advisors, and student services staff at the college can provide support in helping students to access these funds through the state’s HHS Department.
Other Federal Funding Sources Available to Career Pathways Students

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)**

| Summary | SNAP E&T allows states to provide employment and training and related support services to individuals receiving SNAP benefits. These services are intended to assist recipients in gaining the knowledge and skills that will increase their employment and earnings and reduce their need for SNAP. *Note: Implementation of SNAP E&T varies by state.* |
| Who qualifies | Individuals receiving food assistance through SNAP |
| Stipulations | Only available to recipients who are not receiving TANF; may not be used to pay for activities that are otherwise available to students free of charge. There are several stipulations for college students who are enrolled at least half-time. CLASP has a presentation that includes several slides specifically about college students accessing SNAP at [https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2017/10/SNAP%20for%20College%20Students-An%20Overview.pdf](https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2017/10/SNAP%20for%20College%20Students-An%20Overview.pdf) |
| Covered career pathways expenses | Fully reimbursable through E&T Statewide Program Grants: Tuition and fees, case management, and career navigation. 50% reimbursable through E&T Statewide Program Grants: Support services, such as transportation, child care, and books and supplies. Requires that the other 50% be matched by non-federal funding sources, such as state, local, or philanthropic funds. |
SNAP Find a Program in Your State: [https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/find-program-your-state](https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/find-program-your-state) |
• CLASP SNAP E&T Resources: [https://www.clasp.org/snap-et-resources](https://www.clasp.org/snap-et-resources) |
| Step for colleges | Research to see if SNAP E&T funding is available to community college students in your state. |
### Trade Adjustment Assistance

| Summary | Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a federal program that provides a path for employment growth and opportunity to trade-affected workers. The TAA program seeks to provide these individuals with opportunities to obtain the skills, resources, and support they need to become reemployed. The program benefits and services available to individual workers are administered by the states through agreements between the U.S. Secretary of Labor and each state governor. |
| Who qualifies | U.S. workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. |
| Stipulations | To be eligible for TAA, a group of workers must petition the U.S. Department of Labor and become certified. Individual workers covered by the certification can apply for benefits and services at a local American Job Center. |
| Covered career pathways expenses | Tuition: Postsecondary degree or certification from an accredited institution of higher education. Support services: Pays for income replacement and case management. |
| Where to find more information | TAA Fact Sheet: https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/factsheet.cfm |
| Step for colleges | Encourage students who may qualify for TAA to meet with a career counselor at the local American Job Center. |

### GI Bill Funding

| Summary | There are several GI Bill programs, depending on when individuals served, including:  
| Who qualifies | Veterans and service members, their spouses and family members. |
| Stipulations | Amount of funding for tuition depends on the number of credit hours. Post-9/11 GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Institutions agree to make additional funding (beyond federal funds) available to students. A list of Yellow Ribbon institutions can be found at: https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/yellow_ribbon/yrp_list_2017.asp |
| Covered education and support services | Full tuition at publicly funded institutions; monthly housing allowance; $1,000 a year for books and supplies; cost for some certification tests |
| Where to find more information | Forever GI Bill Overview: https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/ForeverGIBill.asp |
| Step for colleges | Each American Job Center has at least one military/veteran specialist called a Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER). Encourage qualified students to meet with the LVER to gain access to this funding. |
Employer Sponsored Programs

Internships

Paid internships are ideal since they provide students with direct funding while at the same time offering them a means to gain a variety of technical and employment skills with advanced manufacturing employers. However, internships for community college students are not as common as those for students enrolled in a bachelor’s level program at a college or a university. This is an area where strong partnerships between colleges and employers can make a difference. When the relationship is focused on building a pipeline of workers, employers are more likely to see the long-term benefits of paid internship programs. In some cases, WIOA funds may be available to partially reimburse employers who bring on adult or dislocated workers who qualify for WIOA funding.

To build their relationships with employers, community colleges can use the many strategies detailed in ATD’s Building Sustainable and Strategic Partnerships with Business and Industry: A Step-by-Step Guide for Community Colleges, which, like this guide, was also published as a result of the ATD Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathways Initiative. It is important to stress to employers the return on investment in internships that pay wages to students completing their career pathways.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are an excellent learn-and-earn opportunity for students enrolled in advanced manufacturing career pathways where apprenticeships are required for entry-level employment or career advancement. When education and employer partnerships are strong, students can receive their classroom-training component at the community college and their on-the-job training with local advanced manufacturers and receive a wage from the employer. They may also be able to utilize WIOA funding for their education, should they qualify.

With the current focus in workforce development on apprenticeships and the inclusion of “Registered Apprenticeships” in the WIOA legislation, community colleges may want to gain a better understanding of this term.

“Registered Apprenticeships” refer to apprenticeships that are registered with the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration Office of Apprenticeship. This office works in conjunction with state apprenticeship agencies to administer the national registration system. Registered Apprenticeships...
are sponsored by individual employers or employer associations (for example, the National Institute of Metalworking Skills) who may partner with labor organizations. The employer or employer association applies to become registered and must follow a set of guidelines set by the Office of Apprenticeship.

An employer’s apprenticeship program does not need to be registered in order for the employer to receive partial reimbursement for a WIOA-qualifying apprentice’s wages. In addition, apprentices may use their ITAs to fund the classroom component through a community college as long as the sponsoring institute is on the Eligible Training Provider List.

Step for colleges: Collaborate with employers to bring on students enrolled in advanced manufacturing career pathways as apprentices, and in turn, work with the employer to utilize the college for the classroom component for current company apprentices.

**Tuition Reimbursement**

According to the Lumina Foundation, 60 percent of employers offer tuition reimbursement programs. Since the majority of community college students work, having a job in the advanced manufacturing field while going to school, rather than in an unrelated field, is an obvious advantage. Students are gaining skills they need and potentially having their tuition reimbursed by the employer. In addition, according to a study conducted by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, 10 percent of community college students (and 5 percent of first-year community college students) who receive employer-provided education assistance benefits show better retention and attainment outcomes than a comparable group of students who do not. The study recommends higher education institutions take a more active role in identifying students who might qualify for this work benefit since the research shows that the number of employers offering this benefit is greater than the number of students taking advantage of it.

Step for colleges: Research tuition reimbursement benefits available through local manufacturers and build awareness among students.
Other Student Funding Opportunities

**Advanced Manufacturing Scholarships**

There are a variety of scholarships available to community college students studying advanced manufacturing. These scholarships can cover the cost of tuition, equipment, tools, internships, and attendance at manufacturing-related conferences. Sponsors of the scholarships fall into three categories:

**Advanced manufacturing associations:** Several national advanced manufacturing associations offer scholarships, such as the National Welding Society and the National Tooling & Machining Association.

**Foundations:** A number of advanced manufacturing foundations administer scholarship programs. Examples include the Alcoa Foundation and the SME Education Foundation.

**Employers:** Some advanced manufacturers provide scholarships, such as Shell and WW Grainger.

An advanced manufacturing scholarship database can be found at [http://www.mfgday.com/scholarships](http://www.mfgday.com/scholarships).

Step for colleges: Tell students about the available advanced manufacturing scholarships.

This can be done a variety of ways, such as through college counselors and academic advisors, by distributing flyers to students, or by having advanced manufacturing instructors mention the scholarships and where to find additional information in class.

**Financial Products and Services through the Working Students Success Network (WSSN)**

ATD’s Working Students Success Network (WSSN) featured 19 community colleges in four states that formed partnerships with local non-profits and community agencies. The goal of the initiative was to help low-income community college students complete certificates and degrees as well as develop financial skills and find jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. WSSN used integrated student support services to assist students with academic, career, and income support from helping them fill out their tax and FAFSA forms to informing them about available resources that improve financial stability for themselves and their families. In addition, the colleges provided resources through partnerships with local financial institutions to help students make informed choices about budgeting and use of financial products. Colleges participating in WSSN used the following strategies to work with lower income students to address some of their most common financial challenges:

- Emergency grants/loans with a vehicle for building a financial cushion
- Automatic partial financial aid refund allocation to savings
- Credit building tools
- Behavior change interventions to improve financial literacy efforts
- Modification of financial aid distribution

ATD’s Progress, Campus Profiles, and Preliminary Lessons from the Working Students Success Network describes how these strategies are being used and their impact.
Step for colleges: Learn more about the work being done through WSSN and identify at least one strategy that might be a good match for your institution.


**Services and Direct Support through Community-based Organizations**

Community-based organizations include public and non-profit organizations that address the social and economic needs of those who live in a geographic areas. They can be a source of direct support for community college students completing advanced manufacturing career pathways. They provide access to health care, housing, and food assistance, as well as counseling and mentoring. In addition, they may be able to assist students with completing financial aid applications.

Step for colleges: If it is not readily available, create a list of local community-based organizations with the services they have available and place the list where students can easily locate it.

Consider partnering with the local government or the local library to create the list.

**Conclusion**

There are a wide variety of funding options for students enrolled in advanced manufacturing career pathways. Through this guide, ATD hopes to expose community colleges to sources of funding for students beyond traditional sources to minimize the personal financial impact of completing an advanced manufacturing career pathway. By including an action for each funding source, the guide lays out steps colleges can take to better assist their students. This guide also can be useful to colleges that have career pathways focused on other industries since much of the information included, such as federal funding sources and employer-sponsored programs, applies to any career pathway.

**Notes**


ABOUT ACHIEVING THE DREAM

Achieving the Dream (ATD) leads a growing network of more than 220 community colleges committed to helping their students, particularly low-income students and students of color, achieve their goals for academic success, personal growth, and economic opportunity. ATD is making progress closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success through a unique change process that builds each college’s institutional capacities in seven essential areas. ATD and more than 100 experienced coaches and advisors work closely with Network colleges in 39 states and the District of Columbia to reach more than 4 million community college students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ACHIEVING THE DREAM:

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