



Voice - Knowledge - Progress  
For Workforce Development

## 2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### OFFICE OF STRATEGIC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2022, Governor Hochul launched the Office of Strategic Workforce Development at Empire State Development. Governor Hochul stated, “Our new Office of Strategic Workforce Development will help reduce barriers to training and employment while supporting businesses with their workforce needs.” Since the official launch of the Office in October 2022, it has announced over \$36 million in over 53 projects.

NYATEP is advocating for the final enacted budget to include annual funding for the office and specifically dollars allocated to fund scaling effective job training, coaching, supportive services (transportation, childcare, etc.) and employment activities. Workforce development is critical to the State’s ability to realize its economic development investments.

#### Recommendations

- Annually Fund the Office of Strategic Workforce Development
- Spend down the current funding to those that have fit the criteria, applied and been accepted

### INCOME DISREGARD

For the last two years, our members who work directly with the working poor and those in poverty, have noted a major hurdle that keeps low-income New Yorkers from economic mobility.

These organizations have indicated that often, despite wanting to pursue career advancement or on the job training, doing so risks an individual or family will go above the income eligibility threshold for public assistance programs. The gradual or sudden loss of public assistance programs, often worth more than the wage increase itself, can result in the family being financially worse off (a benefits cliff) or no better off (a benefits plateau) than before. In short, it does not make short-term financial sense to earn more money and lose crucial sustaining benefits.

In New York, these programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, i.e., cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Supplemental Security Income, New York Child Care Subsidy Program, Section 8-Housing Choice Voucher Program, and/or Emergency Housing Voucher Choice Program.

The FY 2023-24 Enacted State Budget included a one-time income disregard for individuals whose income doesn’t exceed the 200% federal poverty level (FPL) and completing an approved employment program can retain full public assistance benefits for six months for purposes of mitigating a “benefits cliff.” While we are in support of the Income Disregard, NYATEP and our members are concerned that the language limits the number of people participating due to the 200% FPL cap.

#### Recommendations

- For the 2024-25 Executive Budget remove the following language that states a recipient’s total income shall not be more than 200% of the federal poverty level. This language limited the number of participants that are on a career pathway to benefit from this income disregard.
- Pass Senator Persaud and Assemblywoman Davila’s S7259A/A7424A bi-partisan legislation regarding the establishment of a Fiscal Cliff Task Force to conduct a study on fiscal cliffs in the state’s public assistance programs passed unanimously. The legislation would have created a 20-member Fiscal Cliff Task Force, comprised of two members appointed by the Senate Majority Leader, one member appointed by the Senate Minority Leader, two members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, one member appointed by the Assembly Minority Leader, five members appointed by the Governor, three local social services district commissioners appointed by the governor, the commissioner of the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the Commissioner of Health or his or her designee, the Commissioner of the Department of Labor, and the commissioner of the Office of Children and Family Services.

## INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEM

The need for a thoughtful, integrated workforce development data system is especially timely considering the number of New Yorkers unemployed and without a path forward. New York can be a national leader for workforce data by investing \$7- \$10 million of State Wagner Peyser funding for an integrated data system that enables workforce professionals to effectively share and manage programs and performance.

### Recommendations

- Commit state resources and direct state agencies, in collaboration with local stakeholders (e.g., employers, workforce training providers, and colleges), to build and sustain a comprehensive data system through a transparent and accountable process:
- Adopt a set of common performance metrics to be used across workforce development programs and funding streams.
- Build and test the technical elements of the data system.
- Integrate SUNY and CUNY into the statewide data system to better capture workforce outcomes of the state's public higher education system.
- Make data available and user friendly to state and local government agencies, workforce training providers, legislators, employers, and the general public to ensure that it is used to support strong workforce outcomes.

## (NEW) NEW YORKER/MIGRANT ISSUES

Governor Kathy Hochul announced on October 2nd that NYS has identified more than 18,000 job openings with nearly 400 employers who are willing to hire migrants and asylum seekers who have attained legal work status in the United States. This came to light following the recent influx in New York City throughout 2023.

The announcement was released after Governor Hochul directed the New York State Department of Labor to begin connecting businesses with job openings to migrants and asylum seekers who have attained legal work status. The Governor has focused on securing legal work status for migrants and asylum seekers, including successfully pressuring the federal government to grant Temporary Protected Status to individuals from Venezuela, so these individuals can leave the shelter system and begin living independently. Additionally, NYS announced the start of a public awareness campaign to help more employers articulate their business needs and personnel needs.

### Recommendations

- The State to expand the allowable credentials for these individuals to enter the workforce in New York State and help them fill the thousands of jobs that are desperately needed.
- Funding for Municipalities or Employers to Offer Safe, Affordable Housing with locations near public transportation.
- To alleviate restrictions that may have been implemented preventing them from being considered prior.

## REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Young adults are a pool of untapped talent employers can leverage to meet their current and future demands. Structured youth work experience, including pre-apprenticeship, registered apprenticeship and career and technical education (CTE) are a means of addressing the skills and opportunity gaps that have persisted across New York. Per the American Association for Career and Technical Education, "the average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs is 93 percent, compared to an average national freshman graduation rate of 80 percent." Youth who have completed an apprenticeship program have averaged \$42,000 in annual earnings, much higher than the \$33,600 average for all 22- to 26-year-olds in the U.S. and 1.5 times the average earnings (\$27,900) of 22- to 26-year-olds with a high school diploma but no bachelor's degree.

### Recommendations

- Identify inconsistencies in the law and guidance from the Department of Labor and State Education Department regarding Youth Apprenticeships.
- Convene a task force aimed at identifying and eliminating the policy barriers to recruiting and supporting young adults in work-based learning and apprenticeship, while enrolled in high school or postsecondary education.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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