

WHAT IS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION?



7.8 million high school students and **3.3 million** college and adult students participate in CTE, learning skills in the classroom and on the job.¹



CTE is delivered at comprehensive and CTE-dedicated high schools, magnet schools, area technical centers, community and technical colleges and some four-year universities.

CTE students earn industry certifications and licenses, postsecondary certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees and higher.



CTE is good for students, good for businesses and good for communities.



CTE high school students are college and career ready – **96%** graduate high school and most enroll directly in college.²



Associate degrees in CTE fields can pay **up to \$2.8 million** in lifetime earnings - and pay more than bachelor's degrees in other fields - while limiting student debt.³



CTE is the answer to the nation's projected deficit of **6 million** skilled workers through 2032.⁴

LEARN MORE ABOUT CTE AT ACTEONLINE.ORG

¹ Perkins Collaborative Resource Network, Perkins Data Explorer, customized Consolidated Annual Report data, 2022-23.
² Perkins Collaborative Resource Network, Perkins Data Explorer, customized Consolidated Annual Report data, 2021-22; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, 2010-11 through 2017-18; U.S. Department of Education, NCES, IELS:09, Base-year, 2013 Update, High School Transcript, and Second Follow-Up.
³ Carnevale, A. P., Cheah, B., & Werninger, E. (2021). The college payoff: More education doesn't always mean more earnings. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, College Board, Annual Survey of Colleges; NCES, IPEDS Fall 2021 Enrollment data and IPEDS 2022 Institutional Characteristics data.
⁴ Lightcast. (2024). The rising storm: Building a future-ready workforce to withstand the looming labor shortage.

CTE PREPARES THE WORKFORCE ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

- Agriculture**
- Construction**
- Arts, Entertainment & Design**
- Management & Entrepreneurship**
- Education**
- Energy & Natural Resources**
- Financial Services**
- Hospitality, Events & Tourism**
- Healthcare & Human Services**
- Digital Technology**
- Public Service & Safety**
- Advanced Manufacturing**
- Marketing & Sales**
- Supply Chain & Transportation**

CTE WORKS!

Career and technical education (CTE) engages students and prepares them with the skills they need for fulfilling careers in vital, in-demand industries and occupations.

CTE is associated with higher levels of student engagement¹ and higher rates of high school completion.² In fact, the **average high school graduation rate for CTE concentrators** – students who take multiple courses in one CTE program area – is **96%**³ compared to the national rate of 85%.⁴

CTE WORKS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

CTE has statistically significant positive impacts on students' academic achievement, employability skills and college readiness.⁵



High school CTE concentrators are **more likely** than non-concentrators to be **employed full time** and have **higher median annual earnings** 8 years after graduation.⁶



Postsecondary CTE programs lead to careers in high-demand occupations. About **77% of employers from in-demand industries report hiring an employee** because of knowledge and skills gained from **their CTE experience**.⁷

CTE WORKS FOR POSTSECONDARY AND ADULT STUDENTS

An increasing number of job postings ask for short-term credentials: **about 1/3 of postings in 2022**.⁸

Associate degree holders in CTE fields like architecture and engineering, health practitioner, skilled trade and computer occupations can earn **more than \$2 million over their lifetimes, up to \$2.8 million** – the same as the median lifetime earnings for workers with bachelor's degrees.⁹

CTE WORKS FOR THE NATION

Despite millions of job openings around the country, **74% of employers report a persistent mismatch** between the skills they need and the skills workers have.¹⁰

CTE IS GOOD FOR **STUDENTS**, GOOD FOR **BUSINESSES** AND GOOD FOR **COMMUNITIES!**

The United States is facing a **projected deficit of 6 million skilled workers** by 2032.¹¹ Some key industries and occupations facing talent shortages include:

- Health care
- Construction
- Utilities
- Durable manufacturing

CTE generates **billions of dollars** for state economies and local businesses.¹²

