SUNY Apprenticeship Program Plan

Overview

The State University of New York (SUNY), in partnership with the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL), coordinate activities to expand Registered Apprenticeship (RA) in New York, with a focus on engaging small, medium, and large employers to secure paid Registered Apprenticeships in high-skilled, high demand, competitive wage occupations in the advanced manufacturing and healthcare sectors with expansion to other high need industry areas. This was launched through $3 million in the 2016/17 New York State Enacted Budget "for services and expenses of the Apprentice SUNY program to support SUNY community colleges in establishing and developing Registered Apprenticeship programs with area businesses which may include Educational Opportunity Centers (EOCs)."

Background

To meet the growing need for a skilled workforce, New York State has provided funding for community colleges to develop one of the largest statewide public/private partnership apprenticeship programs in the country. The SUNY Apprenticeship Program will assist in developing 2,000 pre-apprentice and Registered Apprenticeships over a four to six-year period in advanced manufacturing, healthcare and other high needs fields. In partnership with NYSDOL's Apprenticeship Office, an building on the success of training workers for high-tech jobs through TAACCCT, the program will leverage the resources and capacity of the community colleges, as well as other SUNY colleges, to provide expertise and support to expand Registered Apprenticeships in high needs areas.

The program will focus on outreach, Related Instruction (RI) through non-credit and credit certificate and degree programs and hybrid and competency-based training and testing. Additionally, the program will consider innovative ideas for pre-apprenticeship training, including new pathways for underrepresented populations.

Structure

As part of the SUNY Performance Improvement Fund (PIF) process, initially two community colleges will act as fiscal leads for the industry focus areas of advanced manufacturing and healthcare. As additional funding becomes available, other fiscal college leads may be identified. A pilot is now being launched for Information Technology/Cybersecurity/Artificial Intelligence. Other areas such asTourism/Hospitality, and Transportation/Logistics may be explored based on evidence of interest from employers.

Strategies

Based on the strong partnership between SUNY and NYSDOL's Apprenticeship Office, the following are strategies identified to grow the number of Registered Apprentices and sponsors in New York State. All of these strategies and activities require staff on SUNY campuses who are knowledgeable in Registered

Apprenticeship. NYSDOL will partner with colleges and provide support including training sessions, materials, and technical assistance.

- **Outreach:** Registered Apprenticeship is a time-honored workforce development tool that combines on-the-job training with classroom and technical training. RA is a job. Programs are sponsored by employers, groups of employers or associations and provide apprentices with the opportunity to learn a trade while earning a paycheck. Registered Apprenticeship has been offered in NYS for over 75 years and is getting increased attention in Washington, DC and around the country. Despite its longevity and attention, there are many misconceptions. For example, there is sometimes confusion regarding what kinds of employers or what kinds of jobs or trades are appropriate. A more robust and targeted outreach campaign will help provide accurate information to employers in new and emerging trades. SUNY's Apprenticeship Program will expand Registered Apprenticeships in New York State by leveraging campus relationships with employers across a number of different industries. By tapping into these networks, the SUNY Apprenticeship Program can provide information to potential sponsors and answer questions about RA. In addition, there are funding opportunities available for expanding apprenticeship into new and emerging industries through both SUNY and NYSDOL. A key component of the outreach strategy is to disseminate information about these grants and tax credits and coordinate the various funding streams.

  - **Industry Roundtables:** Convening employers in a particular industry on a regional basis will help expand Registered Apprenticeships. Using roundtables colleges, in partnership with NYSDOL, will identify particular workforce needs and skills gaps that can be filled through the RA program. A primary goal of the roundtables is to identify employers and other eligible organizations interested in becoming sponsors of Registered Apprenticeship programs. Linking these roundtables to the work of the Regional Economic Development Councils and the Statewide Workforce Development Board are important to meeting the workforce development needs in critical industries across the state. Please note, a representative from NYSDOL must be included on the agenda for all industry roundtables and the agenda and invitation list must be shared with the lead college prior to scheduling.

  - **Local Workforce Development Board Partnerships:** Partnering with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) is another component in the outreach strategy for the SUNY Apprenticeship Program. The Boards have unique relationships with employers in their areas and know firsthand which industries are experiencing skills gaps and what is needed in their area. Each LWDB has at least one member linked to Registered Apprenticeship and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations include an increased emphasis on RA as a workforce development solution. By connecting the SUNY Apprenticeship Program with the activities and resources of the LWDBs, the program will reach employers who are interested in Registered Apprenticeship.

- **Aid in Related Instruction**: Registered Apprenticeship requires a minimum of 144 hours of Related Instruction per year in addition to on-the-job training. While some larger sponsors are able to provide this instruction in-house, many employers look to institutions such as SUNY campuses as a source of that instruction. There are many SUNY campuses already involved in

providing Related Instruction, but some areas of the state still experience a gap in the availability of RI. SUNY campuses will help identify those gaps and explore ways to fill the need. In addition to encouraging more campuses to offer courses, campuses may wish to offer online courses and promote them through Open SUNY.

- o **Certificates and Associates Degrees as part of Related Instruction**: Connecting the Related Instruction required by Registered Apprenticeship to certificates and degrees from institutions of higher education is a movement being encouraged across the country. Some programs in the state already have that connection, allowing apprentices to graduate from programs with not only a certificate of completion from NYSDOL for the apprenticeship program, but also an Associate Degree from an accredited college. Increasing the linkage between the Related Instruction portion of Registered Apprenticeship and degrees from two-and four year colleges will be a benefit to apprentices and the campuses. Micro-credentials might also be a way to create a pathway from non-credit to credit for apprentices. (See guidelines from SUNY on micro-credentials: http://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/microcredentials/).

- **Hybrid and Competency-Based Programs and Testing**: Some employers interested in sponsoring Registered Apprenticeship programs are looking beyond the traditional time-based program, where apprentices spend a certain number of hours becoming competent in the particular tasks detailed in the training outline, in favor of competency and hybrid programs. Apprentices in competency-based programs learn and practice until they demonstrate a competency in the required on-the-job training and Related Instruction skills. A hybrid program is a competency program that requires a certain number of hours spent on each task before being given the opportunity to demonstrate the skill has been attained. Regulations require that sponsors of both competency and hybrid programs develop hands-on and written tests to measure the competency of the Registered Apprentices to ensure they have mastered the skills outlined in the work process. In addition, the tests must be administered by a qualified, neutral, third party. SUNY colleges can serve a crucial role in the development of these programs and testing instruments and faculty can serve as independent testers. Many sponsors do not have access to resources that could be deemed independent nor do they have the ability to develop the needed testing implements.

- **Pre-Apprenticeship Programs:** A pre-apprenticeship program can be an important part of Registered Apprenticeship. It can provide potential apprentices skills necessary to thrive in and complete an apprenticeship. Many examples of pre-apprenticeship programs exist in the construction trades. Developing models for other industries such as advanced manufacturing and healthcare can increase the number of people who meet the minimum requirements for these trades, as well as encourage diversity. As a starting point to developing pre-apprenticeship programs, SUNY will use USDOL information guidelines along with input from NYSDOL: https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_13-12_Acc.pdf.

Funding Guidelines

Industry Focus: Advanced manufacturing and healthcare are the initial industry focus areas. A pilot program is now available in information technology, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence.

Eligibility: All 30 SUNY community colleges are eligible to submit proposals to the lead fiscal colleges (see application contacts below). EOCs and SUNY state-operated institutions may partner with a community college(s) on proposals.

Funding Criteria: Funding amounts vary based on proposed activities and there are funding caps for each strategy (see application for details). Projects must be concluded prior to December 31, 2022. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, subject to funding availability, by a committee comprised of representatives from SUNY System Administration, NYSDOL, and the lead fiscal colleges. Following review, the lead campus will contact applicants with questions and/or final funding decisions. Applicants may be asked to revise a proposal based on committee recommendations.

Funding will initially be distributed by sub-award from two fiscal college leads.. Additional fiscal college leads may be identified. Funding for Industry Roundtables and curriculum development will be provided in two installments, one at the acceptance of the project proposal and one at the conclusion of the project. Funding for Related Instruction will be paid at the conclusion of the course and pre-apprenticeship payments will be made on a quarterly basis. Funding for other initiatives, including hybrid and competency-based programs and testing, will be determined on a case by case basis.

Please Note: No indirect costs will be allowed. However, at the discretion of the review committee, a project management fee (not to exceed 10% of the total project) may be applied depending on the proposal and scope.

Reporting Requirements: Funded institutions will be required to provide progress reports and a project completion report that detail success in achieving the stated project goals and metrics. Failure to meet reporting requirements may result in the withholding of future installments of SUNY Apprenticeship Program funding as well as future SUNY and New York State funds. Site visits may be conducted.

Proposal Submission: Each proposed project must be submitted via the application (separate form) to the contacts below based on industry sector. General questions may be directed to Denise Zieske, SUNY System Administration (denise.zieske@suny.edu).

Community of Practice: The SUNY Apprenticeship Program is a Community of Practice ("CoP"). CoPs have been created to serve as the collaborative model across the SUNY community to establish common goals, share best practices, and work towards collective outcomes. While the CoPs help drive the direction of SUNY's long-term vision, success depend heavily on meaningful engagement by the participating institutions. All colleges receiving sub-awards will join the Apprenticeship CoP. The expectation for awarded campuses is that they will:

- Provide updates on progress as requested
- Maintain regular communication with other awarded campuses using SUNY's Workplace
- Convene with other campuses in the CoP

Application Contacts:
- Advanced manufacturing: James Willey (jwilley@mvcc.edu)
- Healthcare: Mary Kohan (kohanmj@sunysccc.edu)
- Information technology, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence pilot: James Willey (jwilley@mvcc.edu)