THE SKILLS IN THE STATES FORUM IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF:

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

ballmer GROUP

The James Irvine Foundation

THE JPB FOUNDATION

JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Lumina FOUNDATION

GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

JOIN THE CONVERSATION:
@skillscoalition
@nationalskillscoalition
#SkillsInTheStates

NEED HELP? Stop by the registration desk for assistance during the event.
Welcome to the Skills in the States Forum

Welcome to the 2018 Skills in the States Forum for Policy, Advocacy, and Impact. You’re joined by over 100 people from twenty-nine states representing a diverse array of stakeholders with two shared goals: creating more opportunities for workers to move into good jobs and increasing economic growth in our states by investing in the skills of all people.

We’re gathered here at an important juncture. In November, many states will elect new governors and legislators, creating new opportunities to advance the issues we care about. Over the next two days, we’ll discuss strategies for advancing employer-based upskilling, work-based learning, job training and the safety net, and equitable employment, as well as additional strategies for eliminating barriers to education and employment. We’ll also have the chance to strategize with each other on coalition-building and advocacy tactics needed to transform these ideas into actionable state policy.

We hope to use this Forum to leverage our collective expertise across states and organizations, returning home with new strategies and enthusiasm for advancing the skills agenda.

Thank you for coming to lend your voice to the discussion on skills policy, advocacy, and impact in the states.

The Skills in the States Forum Steering Committee,
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2018

8:30 – 11:30 a.m.  Pre-Forum Meeting (Invitation-Only)  Bonbright Room – 9th Floor
Work-Based Learning Academy

12:00 – 2:00 p.m.  Lunch, Welcome, and Plenary Discussion  Grand Ballroom – 2nd Floor
Welcome – Andy Van Kleunen, CEO, National Skills Coalition
Plenary Discussion – Getting Skills on Your Governor’s Agenda
Thirty-six states will have gubernatorial elections in 2018, and jobs are a key issue for state leaders. During this plenary session, speakers will discuss actions state coalitions can take to advance skills policies with new governors, as well as incumbents.
• Marybeth Campbell, Executive Director, SkillWorks
• Stephen Parker, Legislative Director, National Governors Association Education and Workforce Committee, Office of Government Relations
• Alma Salazar, Senior Vice President, Center for Education Excellence & Talent Development, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
• Moderator: Rachel Unruh, National Skills Coalition
Launching a State Skills Policy Network – Brooke DeRenzis, State Policy and Network Director, National Skills Coalition and Matthew Muench, Portfolio Manager, Ballmer Group

2:00 – 2:15 p.m.  Break

2:15 – 3:45 p.m.  Concurrent Peer-Led Discussion Sessions:

Session A: Policies to support employer investments in worker upskilling. As the labor market tightens, employers are increasingly eager to consider creative ways to upskill existing workers or help newly hired workers succeed on the job. In this session, participants will discuss how states can encourage more businesses to invest in worker training, particularly for entry-level and frontline workers.  Rogers Room – 9th Floor
• Facilitator: Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, National Skills Coalition
• Peer Discussants: Amy Donahoe, Chamber of Greater Springfield (OH)  Rebekah Lashman, Commonwealth Corporation (MA)

Session B: Using sector partnership and career pathway policies to promote equitable employment. Acquiring skills that employers demand and connecting to employer networks are vital for building and maintaining a career. Yet racial discrimination and segregation have contributed to inequities in postsecondary education, training, and employment. In this session, participants will discuss how to use data and other tools to advocate for sector partnership and career pathways policies that promote racial equity in employment.  James Room – 9th Floor
• Facilitator: Melissa Johnson, National Skills Coalition
• Peer Discussants: Luis Barrera Castañón, Goodwill Southern California  Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner
AGENDA

Session C : What states are learning from their efforts to expand apprenticeship and work-based learning. With policymakers’ growing interest in apprenticeship and work-based learning, states are using a variety of strategies to expand these programs to new industries and new workers. In this session, participants will discuss the range of policies they are working to advance, as well as progress and challenges. Bonbright Room – 9th Floor

- Facilitator: Rachel Hirsch, National Skills Coalition
- Peer Discussants: Meridith Berger, Greensboro Chamber of Commerce (NC) Manny Rodriguez, Revolution Workshop (IL)

Session D : Using state policy to expand job opportunities for people who were formerly incarcerated. After record-high incarceration rates, many states are taking action to reform their criminal justice systems and reduce barriers that formerly incarcerated people face when they re-enter their communities. In this session, participants will discuss how state advocates can leverage criminal justice reform efforts to expand employer-driven training and job opportunities for workers with criminal convictions. Heritage Ballroom – 2nd Floor

- Facilitator: Michael Richardson, National Skills Coalition
- Peer Discussants: Julia Root, Center for Employment Opportunities (CA) Caryn York, Job Opportunities Task Force (MD)

3:45 – 4:00 p.m. Break

4:00 – 5:30 p.m. Concurrent Peer-Led Discussion Sessions:

Session A: Using the safety net to focus on skill-building and supportive services instead of work requirements. Many state and federal leaders are focused on decreasing the use of public benefits and tackling poverty. In many cases, these goals have boosted attention on workforce development programs as part of the solution. However, work requirements in public benefit programs such as SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid are also increasingly cited by state leaders as a necessary part of the answer to these challenges. In this session, participants will discuss how state advocates and workforce practitioners can capitalize on the attention policymakers are giving to successful job training programs as solutions to poverty while pushing back against work requirements and the obstacles that they create. Rogers Room – 9th Floor

- Facilitator: Melissa Johnson, National Skills Coalition
- Peer Discussants: Jessica Fraser, Indiana Institute for Working Families Jenny Taylor, Goodwill of North Georgia

Session B: Local policies to grow an inclusive workforce: What can states learn? In cities across the country, mayors are creating ambitious workforce development strategies as part of their overall effort to increase economic mobility and build vibrant, inclusive local economies. In this session, participants will discuss the impact of these strategies and potential lessons for state policy. James Room – 9th Floor

- Facilitator: Rachel Unruh, National Skills Coalition
- Peer Discussants: Christian Gonzalez-Rivera, Center for an Urban Future (NY) Chioke Mose-Telesford, City of Detroit Mayor’s Office (MI)
Session C: Working on workforce development with your state’s immigrant affairs policy leaders. In recent years, numerous states have established Offices of New Americans or Immigrant Integration Task Forces or work groups. Despite the growth of these initiatives — and the fact that immigrants make up 1 in 6 American workers — state skills policies don’t always reflect the assets and aspirations of their foreign-born residents. In this session, participants will discuss opportunities to tackle this challenge by bringing immigrant affairs agencies into the state workforce development conversation.

**Bonbright Room – 9th Floor**
- **Facilitator:** Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, National Skills Coalition
- **Peer Discussants:**
  - Betty Cruz, Change Agency (PA)
  - Jeff Gross, WES Global Talent Bridge (MA)
  - Erin Roth, Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

Session D: Expanding job training by providing supportive services. For many low-income workers, access to supportive services like childcare, transportation, or funds to cover small-cost emergencies can make or break their success in a job training program. In this session, participants will discuss innovative ways to fund support services for low-income workers who are pursuing apprenticeship, postsecondary education, and training.

**Heritage Ballroom – 2nd Floor**
- **Facilitator:** Brooke DeRenzis, National Skills Coalition
- **Peer Discussants:**
  - Erin Frasier, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
  - Chaer Robert, Colorado Center on Law and Policy
  - Bonita Robertson, Greater New Orleans Foundation (LA)

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Networking Reception **Conference Center Foyer – 9th Floor**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2018**

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast **Grand Ballroom – 2nd Floor**

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. Opening Remarks & Review of Day **Grand Ballroom – 2nd Floor**

9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Concurrent Peer-Led Discussion Sessions

**Session A:** Creating a shared coalition ask for a new governor. New governors face a variety of competing asks from stakeholders with different interests. In this session, participants will discuss how to create a shared policy ask and mobilize partners around it to garner attention with new governors.

**Rogers Room – 9th Floor**
- **Facilitator:** Rachel Hirsch, National Skills Coalition
- **Peer Discussants:**
  - Rona Sherriff, California EDGE Coalition
  - Pat Steele, Central Iowa Works
AGENDA

Session B: Educating legislators on postsecondary education and workforce development. With turnover in state legislatures and committee changes, state advocates are always looking for opportunities to educate new policymakers on skills policies. In this session, participants will discuss how to use legislator workshops, briefings and other mechanisms to engage new legislators on skills policy issues. *Heritage Ballroom – 2nd Floor*

- **Facilitator:** Michael Richardson, National Skills Coalition
- **Peer Discussants:** Andrew Bradley, Indiana Institute for Working Families
  Sarah Labadie, Women Employed (IL)

Session C: Using state credential attainment goals to drive policy change. Some governors have used credential attainment goals to develop shared buy-in for postsecondary education and workforce strategies across agency leaders. In this session, participants will discuss how to advocate for governors to use these strategies to drive action. *James Room – 9th Floor*

- **Facilitator:** Brooke DeRenzis, National Skills Coalition
- **Peer Discussants:** Kate Kinder, Portland Community College (OR)
  Kenyatta Lovett, Complete Tennessee

10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Break
10:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Plenary Discussion – Using a Regional Lens to Advance a Policy Agenda across States

Policymakers often look to neighboring states for new ideas and take notice of strategies that give nearby states a competitive edge in the economy. State partners can use this regional focus to their advantage. During this plenary session, state partners from NSC’s Southern Skills Policy Initiative will discuss how a regional framework is helping them advance policies in their own states and what emerging lessons mean for a cross-state regional approach in other parts of the country. *Grand Ballroom – 2nd Floor*

- Antiqua Cleggett, Executive Director, Central Six AlabamaWorks!
- Allan Freyer, Director, Workers’ Rights, North Carolina Justice Center
- Matt Williams, Director of Research, Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative
- **Moderator:** Melissa Johnson, National Skills Coalition

12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Lunch: Reflections and Next Steps for Policy Change in 2018

Participants will have time to plan next steps with others from their state and discuss opportunities to work with National Skills Coalition and other state network partners. *Grand Ballroom – 2nd Floor*
PLENARY SPEAKERS

Getting Skills on Your Governor’s Agenda

**Marybeth Campbell** – Executive Director, SkillWorks
@SkillWorks_MA
Marybeth Campbell is the executive director of SkillWorks, an ambitious effort on the part of philanthropy, government, community organizations, unions, and employers to create a workforce development system that helps low-skill, low-income residents move to family-sustaining jobs and helps employers find and retain skilled employees.

**Stephen Parker** – Legislative Director, National Governors Association, Education and Workforce Committee, Office of Government Relations
@NatlGovsAssoc
Stephen Parker directs policy and advocacy for education and workforce issues, including: early childhood, K-12 and postsecondary education, workforce development and child nutrition. He leads the governors’ Education and Workforce Committee and is the liaison between governors and the federal government on education and workforce issues.

**Alma Salazar** – Senior Vice President, Center for Education Excellence & Talent Development, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
@LAAreaChamber
Dr. Alma Salazar is vice president of the Center for Education Excellence & Talent Development for the L.A. Area Chamber. She oversees the Chamber’s education and workforce development programs and also directs the Chamber’s higher education and workforce development policies. In 2012, Salazar was appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown to serve on the California Workforce Development Board.

**MODERATOR: Rachel Unruh** – Chief of Staff, National Skills Coalition
@skillscoalition
As Chief of Staff, Rachel helps lead National Skills Coalition by facilitating the integration of organizing, advocacy, and communications strategies. Rachel joined NSC in 2006 to lead the Skills2Compete national campaign.
PLENARY SPEAKERS

Using a Regional Lens to Advance a Policy Agenda across States

Antiqua Cleggett – Executive Director, Central Six AlabamaWorks! @Alabama_Works

Central Six Development Council - Central Six AlabamaWorks is a regional collaborative to support workforce initiatives across the Birmingham Metropolitan region. Under Antiqua’s leadership, Central Six along with the other six regional workforce councils established a strong reputation and return on investment for industry and have since been codified into state legislation (2015) and now receive state funding.

Allan Freyer – Director, Workers’ Rights, North Carolina Justice Center @ncjustice

Allan Freyer is the Director of Workers’ Rights at the North Carolina Justice Center, where he oversees the Center’s policy and campaign efforts aimed at helping North Carolina’s low-wage workers earn higher wages, receive adequate health and safety protections, and access crucial work family supports like paid leave and unemployment insurance.

Matt Williams – Director of Research, Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative @MLICCI1

Matt Williams joined the Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative as Director of Research in August 2016. Matt’s work has helped lead to state policy change in public assistance programs, including TANF and CCDF.

MODERATOR: Melissa Johnson – Senior State Policy Analyst, National Skills Coalition @skillscoalition

Melissa Johnson works to advance National Skills Coalition’s policy platform within the states through research and analysis of state workforce policies, advocacy assistance and policy implementation support.