

National Transportation Career Pathway Initiative

Creating new communities of practice to enhance the transportation workforce

The success of the United States in delivering and managing an efficient, safe, and effective transportation system is directly dependent on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the transportation workforce. To provide for a more strategic and efficient approach to transportation workforce development, the Federal Highway Administration established the National Network for the Transportation Workforce (NNTW), consisting of five Regional Surface Transportation Workforce Centers. These Centers serve as a resource to support, grow, and maintain a skilled and career-ready transportation workforce in their respective regions, and working together as a National Network. The Centers are network oriented rather than program focused, and engage organizations and existing programs to establish new strategic partnerships, and communicate best practices to educators, employers and those on the transportation career pathway.

Career Pathway Initiative

The career pathway initiative develops and demonstrates methods to engage students in the postsecondary educational continuum to choose and succeed in transportation career pathways. The demonstrations will leverage insights from employers to empower students to first learn about critical transportation occupations and then develop the skills to meet the related workforce challenges in the Engineering, Planning, Safety, Environmental and Operations disciplines. See www.nntw.org/career-pathways. With multidisciplinary specialists, stakeholders from across the country, and extensive labor market analysis, the national network team is uniquely positioned to carry out the goals of the strategic initiative. The career pathway demonstration programs will prepare future transportation professionals to develop industry competencies and move beyond disciplinary silos to address transportation workforce challenges throughout the nation.

Role of Stakeholders

The NNTW is actively soliciting the engagement of key stakeholders at the national, regional, and local levels to participate as partners in these important efforts. Stakeholders



can offer:

- On-the-ground assessments of labor supply and demand and workforce skills gaps;
- Assistance in crafting a unified message on career awareness;
- Promotion of NNTW clearinghouse resources to their constituents; and
- Focus on one of the pathway disciplines.

Strategic Outcomes

The Centers are not training centers. The mission is to facilitate communication across states and agencies to leverage scarce resources, to share and build on promising programs, and to create new communities of practice to enhance the transportation workforce at all levels. With the active participation of key stakeholders, the NNTW helps produce:

- **Better data** on transportation job needs and priorities within each region;
- **One-stop portals** to transportation training and education programs in the regions for all levels from middle school through professional development;
- **Better alignment** of education and training to workforce skills gaps;
- **Direct connections** between industry, education, economic development and workforce communities; and
- **Better workers** for sustainable skilled and diverse workforce. ◆

