

# ADVANCING APPRENTICESHIP IN CALIFORNIA

## A Five-Point Action Plan

July 2022



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# Introduction

As we strive to build a more equitable economy and create opportunities for upward mobility in California, apprenticeship is a key tool in our workforce development toolbox to achieve these goals. Apprenticeship is an earn-and-learn model for individuals to upskill or reskill into a new career or new level of their career, as well as a key strategy for employers to fill acute talent needs. In California, we are focusing on apprenticeship because we see how it has provided that pathway into a family-sustaining wage and fulfilling career, not only in the building trades but also in healthcare, technology and many different sectors of our economy.

Building a more equitable economy means being receptive to learning and finding ways to take action. In developing this action plan, we opened up dialogue and brainstormed with stakeholders. Led by the inspirational goal set by Governor Newsom to serve 500,000 apprentices by 2029, we are mapping the pathway to significant expansion of apprenticeship in California. State government can provide the critical support, direction and infrastructure to reach this goal, but the execution and success of this initiative will be through the efforts and partnership with employers, educators, organized labor and the community. We hope that as you read this report, you consider how you can be an engaged partner and join us in expanding apprenticeship.

Thank you for your partnership,



Natalie Palugyai

Secretary,  
Labor & Workforce Development Agency

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Natalie Palugyai".



Katie S. Hagen

Director,  
Department of Industrial Relations

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie S. Hagen".

# Executive Summary

## Advancing Apprenticeship in California

In 2018, Governor Gavin Newsom laid out his administration's commitment to tackle growing income inequality in California. As part of this plan, he identified apprenticeship as one of his administration's three key jobs strategies and noted that they, "provide the education and training necessary to prepare Californians for the jobs of today and tomorrow." He set an ambitious goal for the state: to expand California's apprenticeship system, already the largest in the United States, to serve 500,000 apprentices by 2029.<sup>1</sup>

Why apprenticeship? It's a time-tested education and employment model that allows learners to earn money while they acquire valuable skills, experience, credentials and professional networks. At the same time, it is an innovative way for employers to meet their acute talent needs, by partnering to develop that talent through apprenticeships. Apprenticeships provide a high-quality, structured pathway into a career, built on clear standards that lay out the requirements of an apprentice's job. This means that apprentices know what they need to learn, and employers map a pathway to success within their organizations. Finally, while apprenticeship provides career training outside of the typical classroom-based postsecondary experience, it can also be a college pathway in itself. In California, close connections between community colleges and the apprenticeship system mean apprenticeship can be a jobs strategy as well as a postsecondary attainment strategy.

California's ability to be a national leader in registered apprenticeship is the product of innovative policies and generous investments. The state reimburses the costs of the education associated with an apprenticeship and provides startup funding to get new programs launched. The education funding is through related and supplemental instruction (RSI) funding, along with apportionment funding for credit-bearing community college courses. The California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) provides millions of dollars annually to support local and regional partnerships as they start up and expand innovative apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. All told, California provided nearly \$120 million in apprenticeship funding in 2021–22, and millions more in workforce investments, that can be used to support registered apprenticeship as well as other models.

Apprenticeship policies and investments in the state can go even further. This action plan details a five-point strategy to significantly expand apprenticeship participation, through a combination of new and revised policies. The five action points include: 1) supporting sectoral and regional intermediaries, which play a critical role in building and sustaining multi-employer apprenticeship partnerships; 2) developing and refining state policies and processes for apprenticeships in non-traditional sectors; 3) addressing gender and racial inequities in apprenticeships in traditional construction and firefighting trades; 4) building a statewide youth apprenticeship framework; and 5) encouraging California's state and local governments to hire apprentices into public service.

In isolation, the individual strategies of this action plan would not be sufficient to reach the 500,000-apprentice goal. In concert, they can double the number of Californian apprentices, and expand apprenticeship opportunities to more populations in new industries, while maintaining quality standards for which registered apprenticeships are known.

<sup>1</sup> Gavin Newsom, " [Here's How We Grow California's Economy for Everyone](#), " *Medium*, February 8, 2018.

# Action Plan Overview

The following overview presents the five primary focus areas and outlines a strategy to expand apprenticeship in California.



## 1. Support Regional and Sectoral Apprenticeship Intermediaries

An intermediary is an organization that is the convening force for an apprenticeship program. They aggregate the needs of multiple employers, design the program in collaboration with educators, launch and register the program with the state, and most importantly, support the apprentice through their journey. To cultivate an ecosystem of regional and sectoral intermediaries, California must:

- Work to better align federal and state funds to create a funding infrastructure to scale and sustain apprenticeship intermediaries.
- Develop a catalog of industry associations, colleges and business groups in target occupations and industries, that could be engaged as regional or sectoral apprenticeship intermediaries.



## 2. Expand New and Innovative Apprenticeships

Over 80% of apprenticeships in California are currently in the “traditional” building, construction or fire trades. This means we have an opportunity to expand apprenticeship into all other industry sectors, by taking the effective strategies and learnings from “traditional” apprenticeship programs and applying them to proactively develop the workforce in “non-traditional” sectors.

### ***Strengthen the Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (IACA):***

Established in 2018, IACA, is an advisory committee focused on expanding apprenticeship in these “non-traditional” industries. While it is modeled somewhat after the California Apprenticeship Council (CAC), which oversees “traditional” apprenticeships, there are many opportunities to adjust, support and scale the impact of IACA.

- Reorient IACA towards building a movement and creating a community of practice around non-traditional apprenticeship in California.
- Foster collaboration between DAS and IACA to develop occupational frameworks and marketing materials that build the case for apprenticeship and support employer outreach.

### ***Support DAS Capacity-Building and Communications:***

DAS has long supported apprenticeship programs, and as we seek to expand apprenticeship there are additional opportunities to support the ecosystem.

- Develop better internal and external guides on existing funding available for apprenticeship and how programs can tap into them.
- Identify additional funding sources for new and innovative apprenticeship programs, and build capacity among apprenticeship stakeholders to make California more competitive for federal apprenticeship funding.
- Simplify and streamline the registration processes for new apprenticeships.

# Action Plan Overview



## 3. Grow and Expand Access to Traditional Construction Apprenticeships

Traditional building, construction and fire trade apprenticeships are the backbone of the California apprenticeship system. However, these sectors have a significant gender representation imbalance with only 4% of CAC apprentices identifying as women and non-binary in 2021, and this needs to change.

- Work with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) subcommittee of CAC to assess the effectiveness of efforts to date to increase gender diversity in building, construction and fire trade apprenticeships. Develop metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving gender diversity in construction and firefighting apprenticeships.
- Identify funding for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs that support more women getting into building and firefighting trades.



## 4. Support Youth Apprenticeship for In-School and Out-of-School Youth

Apprenticeship creates a way for students to earn-and-learn, yet the average age of an apprentice in California in 2021 was 33 years old. The apprenticeship pathway needs to be more visible to youth in general. Apprenticeship could start in high school as early as age 16, and could be a key mechanism into a career for disconnected or out-of-school youth. There is much foundational work needed to build out youth apprenticeship in California.

- Establish a working group to develop a provisional definition and quality criteria to support youth apprenticeship pilots. Also, consider a legislative definition of youth apprenticeship in California, to support youth apprenticeship expansion.
- Create an ongoing interagency working group on youth apprenticeship that includes DAS, the California Department of Education (CDE), the CA Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and other agency staff as appropriate to explore opportunities and make recommendations for aligning state and federal funding, and to provide technical assistance.



## 5. Expand State and Local Public Sector Apprenticeships

There are 240,000 people employed by the State and roughly 1.6 million people working in the public sector. As a major employer, the public sector can lead the way in creating apprenticeship pathways to meet talent needs, create more equitable on-ramps and set an example for other employers.

- Create an inventory of county and municipal governments developing or implementing apprenticeship programs, or other earn-and-learn training strategies.
- Highlight early pilots, best practices and success stories, creating a community of practice for public service apprenticeship practitioners through IACA's civil service subcommittee.
- Identify the challenges within state civil service that inhibit apprenticeship growth and develop a plan to address them with relevant state entities.

# Background and Context

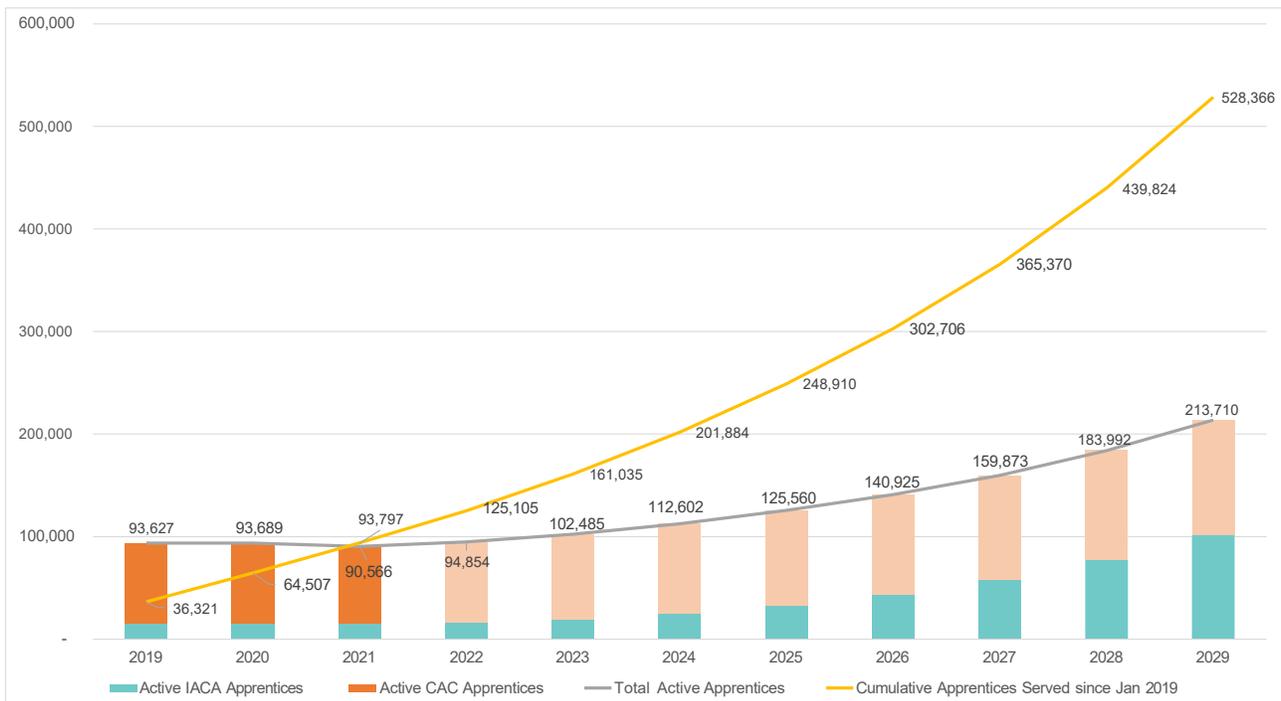
*“Let’s encourage businesses to become creators, not just consumers of talent by establishing an audacious goal of 500,000 earn-and-learn apprenticeships by 2029.”*

California Governor Gavin Newsom,  
2018

To articulate the specifics of Governor Newsom’s goal, this plan will frame the number of apprentices in two ways (1) by total Californians served through the earn-and-learn mechanism of Registered Apprenticeship, and (2) by total number of active apprentices at any given moment.

Since Governor Newsom took office in 2019, California has served 93,797 apprentices (see chart below); as of December 31, 2021 there were 90,566 active apprentices. Despite the proximity of these two numbers at this moment, they are distinct measures. The active apprentices figure provides a snapshot that constantly fluctuates as apprentices start their program, graduate, or exit for a variety of reasons. The cumulative apprentices figure shows the total number of people served by the earn-and-learn model of apprenticeship. As we work towards the goal of serving 500,000 Californians through apprenticeship by 2029, it is important to understand what this means in terms of active apprenticeships.

Chart 1: Historical and Projected Apprentices in California



The goal of serving over 500,000 apprentices by 2029 corresponds to approximately 210,000 active apprenticeships, which is more than double the number of active apprentices as of 2021.

# Background and Context

In 2018, AB 235 created two different areas of apprenticeship:

- CAC oversees traditional apprenticeships in the building and firefighting trades.
- IACA advises on new and innovative (sometimes referred to as “non-traditional”) apprenticeships.

In the preceding chart and throughout this document, the term “CAC apprentices” refers to traditional apprenticeships in the building and fire trades, and “IACA apprentices” refers to the new and innovative apprenticeships from sectors other than the building and fire trades.

In the expansion of apprenticeship in CA, the divisions supporting apprenticeship will be increasing reporting and analytics, both making information available publicly through dashboards<sup>2</sup> and also through reports to IACA, CAC and the Legislature. The reporting will offer tracking of new registrations and active apprentices, along with demographic data, measures of equity, and insights on industries, occupations, and regions.

In the yearlong process, the California Labor & Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), which includes the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) and its Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), worked with New America and Social Policy Research Associates, to develop this action plan with funding from the James Irvine Foundation. The development process featured extensive stakeholder engagement including exploratory interviews, brainstorming and workshoping of the action plan with IACA, CAC, the Irvine Foundation Better Careers grantees, employers and employer associations, unions, and multiple workforce development and education agencies.

Much like the action plan development process, the success of this plan is contingent upon all stakeholders engaging and participating in efforts to expand apprenticeship.



<sup>2</sup> Division of Apprenticeship Standards, [Apprenticeship Data](#)

# Five-Point Action Plan

Each section below includes a discussion of why each of the five points is important and what near-term and longer-term actions can move each strategy forward. Near-term action steps are those that can be taken within the next one to two years, while longer-term action steps are in the three-to five-year timeframe.



## 1. Support Regional and Sectoral Apprenticeship Intermediaries

### *Why is this strategy important?*

Successful state apprenticeship systems are built on a robust network of regional and sector-based partnerships that include a wide variety of key stakeholders. Developing and sustaining these partnerships requires a coordinating body—an intermediary—that provides technical and administrative support to apprentices, educators and employers.

For traditional apprenticeship programs, unions often fill this function. In non-traditional apprenticeships, the intermediary function can be performed by different types of stakeholders including unions, workforce development boards, non-profit or community-based organizations, community colleges, industry associations, staffing firms and other for-profit entities. Intermediaries may be regional (supporting apprenticeship pathways in many different industries across a region) or sectoral (supporting pathways in a single industry across a region or the state) in their scope. In all cases, they provide a critical investment and implementation infrastructure to support a systemic approach to apprenticeship.

A sustainable system to support apprenticeship partnerships by investing in regional and sectoral intermediaries may require statutory changes. However, the state can also take near-term steps to lay the groundwork for the transformational changes necessary to reach the 500,000-apprentice goal. LWDA and other California agencies can build a statewide system with:

- A *blueprint* for regional and sectoral collaboration, based on successful partnerships already operating in California and other states.
- A *network* of regional and sectoral intermediaries who can share best practices, cultivate awareness among business and education partners, and inform further development of a statewide partnership system.

### **Case Study:**

#### *LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network*



Local Apprenticeships Uniting a Network of Colleges & High Schools

Network, led by the Riverside Community College District (RCCD), was designed to create a single, streamlined user experience for businesses, learners and other workforce stakeholders interested in apprenticeship. Building on the expertise and existing relationships of the Inland Empire Desert Region Consortium—the regional Strong Workforce Program consortium of 12 community colleges and nearly 60 school districts in the Inland Empire—LAUNCH has helped to simplify the patchwork of apprenticeship options, that prospective apprentice employers encounter when they go it alone.

The LAUNCH Network is a multi-sector regional intermediary, and since its founding in 2018 it has registered programs in over 20 occupations, from manufacturing to cybersecurity to health care, including some programs that enroll youth. Affiliated colleges and school districts provide related coursework for apprentices and maintain their own employer relationships, while LAUNCH staff at RCCD develop program models and promote a unified regional apprenticeship strategy. By centralizing administrative processes and technical assistance, LAUNCH reduces the time it takes for new apprenticeship programs to get off the ground, and makes more efficient use of public apprenticeship funding.

# Five-Point Action Plan

## ***What action steps can advance this strategy?***

### ***1 Blueprint:***

- Leverage California's \$10 million USDOL State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation (SAEEI) grant to create proof of concept for a regional investment strategy that provides the partnership infrastructure necessary to sustain and scale local apprenticeship systems. SAEEI grantees will work in close partnership with workforce development boards, and can provide statewide models for the creation, growth, and sustainability of regional and sectoral intermediaries.
- Work to better align federal and state funds, to create a funding infrastructure to scale and sustain apprenticeship intermediaries.
- Develop and test metrics that evaluate the success of regional partnerships or intermediaries in system-level objectives, in addition to program-level performance indicators.<sup>3</sup> Examples of system-level success indicators include:
  - a) Building multi-employer programs.
  - b) Working with multiple educational institutions or local workforce boards.
  - c) Serving diverse populations across racial, gender, socioeconomic and ability groups.

### ***2 Network:***

- Elevate apprenticeship as a preferred training model across State investments, including in the activities of the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) and Employment Training Panel (ETP), and consider incentives for employers and/or labor-management partnerships willing to use apprenticeship as a training strategy for new and incumbent workers.
- Using labor market information from the Employment Development Department (EDD) and program information from CWDB, CCCCO, and ETP, develop a catalog of industry associations, colleges, business groups in target occupations and industries that could be engaged as regional or sector intermediaries.

<sup>3</sup> For an example of a reporting framework that includes system-level indicators, see the Partnership to Advance [Youth Apprenticeship's Data Framework](#).

# Five-Point Action Plan



## 2. Expand New and Innovative Apprenticeships

### *Why is this strategy important?*

As we develop a strategy to reach the ambitious goal set forth by our Governor, it is important to recognize that while there is some room for growth in the building trades, there are significant structural limitations to expanding the number of CAC apprentices in California. The number of CAC apprentices ties closely to the state's economy and particularly to the building industry. The recently passed federal infrastructure bill could lead to some growth in CAC apprentices, but for the most part, the number of active CAC apprentices is likely to remain steady. If we do nothing and maintain the status-quo, we will serve approximately 330,000 apprentices by 2029. Therefore, to bridge the gap between 330,000 apprentices served at the current rate and the 500,000-apprentice goal, it will be necessary to expand new and innovative apprenticeships under IACA to serve at least 170,000 more apprentices.

Apprenticeship programs in non-traditional sectors such as health care, information technology, education, civil service, and business operations can provide accessible, equitable pathways into careers. To ensure non-traditional apprenticeships meet the same rigorous standards of job quality, employer engagement and economic mobility as apprenticeships in traditional occupations, stakeholders need to be able to count on timely, efficient state government support to plan, launch and sustain their partnerships and programs.

Non-traditional apprenticeship programs that do not fall under the authority of the CAC are administered directly by the Chief of DAS with advice and guidance from IACA. Although IACA provides crucial support to DAS, its committee and subcommittee members are ex-officio state government leaders and non-governmental volunteers, and currently struggle to fulfill their numerous responsibilities under section 3073 of the Labor Code.

### **Case Study:**

#### *Bitwise Industries*

# BITWISE INDUSTRIES

Bitwise Industries provides technology services, workforce training programs and co-working spaces in Fresno, Bakersfield, Merced, Oakland and several other locations across the United States. Since the company's founding in 2013, Bitwise has focused on expanding access to careers in the tech industry, including through apprenticeships, and low-cost or no-cost online courses. In its nationally registered Workforce Tech Apprenticeship, launched in 2021 with a new round of venture capital investments, learners select from online tech training classes and are invited to enroll in competency-based apprenticeships in marketing, sales, software development and tech support, all while working on Bitwise contracts under expert supervision.

# Five-Point Action Plan

LWDA can pursue two related sets of strategies in order to expand new and innovative apprenticeship programs that will account for a significant portion of the 500,000 apprentice objective:

- *Explore staffing of IACA strategic initiatives and committees to support a movement-building mission.*
- *Support DAS capacity-building and communications efforts around non-traditional programs.*

## ***What near-term action steps can advance this strategy?***

### ***1. Strengthening IACA:***

- Reorient IACA towards building a movement and community of practice around non-traditional apprenticeship in California. DAS could provide guidance that:
  - a) Outlines the vision and mission for IACA.
  - b) Details its approval processes and its role relative to CAC, DAS and the traditional apprenticeship approval process.
  - c) Clarifies options for registering apprenticeship programs that use competency-based or hybrid learning models.
- Evaluate staffing of IACA strategic initiatives and subcommittees. Provide additional coordination and support to DAS consultants who are assigned to guide IACA subcommittees.
- Foster collaboration between IACA and DAS to develop occupational frameworks and marketing materials that build the case for apprenticeship and support employer outreach. These materials could be targeted at specific non-traditional apprenticeship occupations that state leadership have identified as high-priority.<sup>4</sup>

## **Case Study:**

### ***ECEPTS***



In 2015, the Early Educator Training Center of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) began exploring apprenticeship as a strategy to address the alarming shortage of qualified early care and education (ECE) workers in California. Over four years, SEIU piloted three registered apprenticeship occupations for center-based childcare workers, home-based childcare providers and Head Start teachers. The experience of these pilots paved the way for the formation of a statewide ECE sector-focused intermediary organization, Early Care and Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS), which launched in 2019. To date, ECEPTS has served over 300 apprentices in four registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship pathways, drawing on a growing base of state and philanthropic support. ECEPTS has used its non-traditional apprenticeships to fill critical care economy roles. Additionally, with its steadfast emphasis on educational rigor, fair wages and job quality, the partnership has also helped to recast entry-level ECE positions as springboards to well-paid careers in ECE and in human services.

<sup>4</sup>Note that this action step could build on an ongoing federal project managed by the Urban Institute to develop [competency-based occupational frameworks for apprenticeships in non-traditional sectors](#).

# Five-Point Action Plan

## *2. Supporting DAS capacity-building and communications:*

- Develop better guides both internally and externally regarding existing apprenticeship funding opportunities and how programs can tap into them. California provides multiple funding streams that can support apprenticeship specifically, or apprenticeship alongside other workforce development models. However, these funding streams are often complex and information is not always easily accessible to interested stakeholders.
- Identify additional funding sources for new and innovative apprenticeship programs, then build capacity within DAS and new and innovative apprenticeship stakeholders to make California more competitive for federal apprenticeship funding.
- Simplify and streamline registration processes for new apprentices and new apprenticeship programs.
- Increase the visibility of apprenticeship programs in California by developing an online public inventory of existing registered apprenticeship programs, and by offering occupational frameworks for non-traditional occupations.<sup>5</sup>

## ***What longer-term action steps can advance this strategy?***

### *1. Strengthening IACA:*

- Build consensus and develop guidance to expand the reach of IACA.
- Establish an oversight function within DAS, drawing on IACA membership, to monitor racial and gender diversity, as well as representation of people with disabilities within non-traditional programs, and provide technical assistance to programs that do not meet benchmarks.

### *2. Supporting DAS capacity-building and communications:*

- Establish a working group of LWDA, CCCC, California State University, University of California, and CDE staff to improve connections between non-traditional apprenticeship programs, secondary and postsecondary educational programs available in the state.<sup>6</sup>
- Develop a statewide communication strategy to inform the public about apprenticeship opportunities across different sectors and to incorporate non-traditional apprenticeships into existing regional and sectoral training and economic development initiatives.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example: New York's [apprenticeable occupations list](#). Wisconsin also maintains program guides for its [11 apprenticeable sectors](#) (see this [IT example](#)).

<sup>6</sup> Recently, the University of Colorado–Denver launched [two registered degree apprenticeship programs](#) in construction project management and computer science. Degree apprenticeships, including pathways that begin in high school, have also been implemented in North Carolina.

# Five-Point Action Plan



## 3. Grow and Expand Access to Traditional Construction Apprenticeships

### *Why is this strategy important?*

California already has the largest number of active apprentices of any state in the country, and the highest number per capita of the ten largest American states. However, in California, as in states across the nation, traditional skilled trade apprenticeships have a representation problem. Nationwide and across all sectors, 12.5 percent of active apprentices in 2020 were women.<sup>7</sup> In California, 7.5 percent of all active apprentices are women and in the construction trades, women make up only 4 percent of active apprentices, according to 2021 year-end data from DAS. An even smaller percentage were women of color, and the number of people with disabilities in building trade apprenticeships is vanishingly small.

LWDA's strategies to support youth apprenticeship, civil service apprenticeship, and regional and sectoral partnerships can engage traditional as well as non-traditional apprenticeship stakeholders. Especially as California invests in affordable housing and as federal infrastructure investments take shape—likely with significant workforce development provisions attached—LWDA could continue to engage local intermediaries that provide pre-apprenticeship training, and work with employers to support access and equity for women and non-binary Californians, in traditional building and firefighting trades apprenticeships.

### **Case Study:**

#### *Women In Non Traditional Employment Roles (WINTER)*



Women In Non Traditional Employment Roles (WINTER) is an apprenticeship readiness program aimed at helping women in Southern California build the foundational skills needed for a successful apprenticeship and career in the construction trades. WINTER was established in 1996 by Dr. Lynn Shaw, a former tradeswoman who was frequently the only woman on her job sites. In addition to its pre-apprenticeship offerings, WINTER partners with unions and employers to help its trainees enter registered apprenticeship programs.

Increasing pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship access cannot, on its own, substantially increase the participation of women and non-binary people in the building and firefighting trades. But alongside other concerted efforts to address workplace safety issues, sexual harassment, and barriers to promotion and advancement, WINTER and other similar organizations can raise awareness of traditional apprenticeship opportunities and gradually grow the ranks of women and non-binary people in journeyworker and leadership positions in construction and firefighting.

<sup>7</sup> Discover Apprenticeship: Women in Apprenticeship, US Department of Labor, 2021, [https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/women-in-apprenticeship-fact-sheet\\_0.pdf](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/women-in-apprenticeship-fact-sheet_0.pdf)

# Five-Point Action Plan

## ***What action steps can advance this strategy?***

- Work with the EEO subcommittee of the CAC and leverage the High Road Construction Careers initiative to assess the effectiveness of efforts to increase gender diversity in building and fire trade apprenticeships. This could include:
  - a) Revisiting the findings and recommendations of CAC's 2006 Blue Ribbon Report to assess progress made over the past decade.<sup>8</sup>
  - b) Convening Multi-Craft Core Curriculum program administrators to collect best practices around gender diversity in construction apprenticeships.
  - c) Developing and implementing new metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to improve gender diversity in construction and firefighting.
- Identify funding for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs that support more women getting into the construction and firefighting trades.
- Allocate marketing resources to elevate women's successes in construction and firefighting apprenticeships, and increase public awareness of apprenticeships.
- Leverage and educate stakeholders on Project Labor Agreements, a mechanism that supports workforce diversity in publicly-funded projects.

<sup>8</sup> Blue Ribbon Committee on Women in Apprenticeship, California Apprenticeship Council, 2006, [https://www.dir.ca.gov/das/women in apprenticeship final.pdf](https://www.dir.ca.gov/das/women%20in%20apprenticeship%20final.pdf)

# Five-Point Action Plan



## 4. Support Youth Apprenticeship for In-School and Out-of-School Youth

*Why is this strategy important?*

Many young people today are seeking structured, affordable, and secure pathways into good careers, which is precisely what apprenticeship can offer. Often, young adults are unaware of apprenticeship or have a difficult time finding apprenticeship opportunities, whether through their high school, their college, or even local community-based organizations. The average California apprentice is in their early thirties, and may have spent years in low-wage work. Building apprenticeship opportunities for high school and college-age youth in California will address some of the key drivers of income inequality and social exclusion, including equitable access to work experience and affordable postsecondary education. For California employers, a clear framework supporting youth apprenticeship would provide a new way to cultivate a skilled, diverse and young workforce that can compete as technology and the economy change.

To support a statewide youth apprenticeship system that provides young Californians in every region of the state access to high-quality, college-connected opportunities in numerous different occupational fields, California's apprenticeship community needs:

- *A clear definition and quality principles* for youth apprenticeship—similar to, but more prescriptive than, the pre-apprenticeship best practices DAS has published.<sup>9</sup>
- *Funding and program development supports* to ensure that K-12 and community college districts receive adequate funding for their youth apprenticeship activities, and that businesses can depend on reliable support as sponsors of youth apprenticeship.

### Case Study:

#### *Apprenticeships Reaching Career Horizons (ARCH)*



**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION**



The Apprenticeships Reaching Career Horizons (ARCH) initiative, led by the San Joaquin County Office of Education, is the first registered youth apprenticeship program in the state of California. Building off of a \$500,000 CAI grant in late 2019, ARCH has partnered with school districts, regional employers and community colleges to design apprenticeship programs for high school juniors and seniors. Currently, registered programs are available in information technology and teacher's aide/paraprofessional occupations.

ARCH operates as a regional intermediary, providing shared guidelines for its programs and helping to integrate college credit-bearing related coursework with high schools' dual enrollment programs. Individual school districts have flexibility in terms of the occupations and employers they choose to work with. The first 10 youth apprentices hired through the ARCH initiative are employed by their school districts, but program administrators have also started engaging with private sector employers as well.

The coronavirus pandemic struck just as ARCH was getting off the ground, and it will take time to ramp up enrollment. Still, ARCH staff have already developed a handbook for other prospective youth apprenticeship partnerships, and with additional state guidance and investment, the ARCH model could be replicated in other regions of California.

<sup>9</sup> See DAS's "[Best Practices: Preparation for Apprenticeship Training](#)." The Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA), led by New America, provides an example of [youth apprenticeship definitions and quality principles](#).

# Five-Point Action Plan

## ***What near-term action steps can advance this strategy?***

### *1 Definition and quality principles:*

- Through DAS, establish a working group to develop a provisional definition and quality criteria to support youth apprenticeship pilots. This group should include key stakeholders from the education, workforce development, labor and apprenticeship communities. This group could also consider options for codifying the definition and quality criteria in law or regulation, as discussed below.
- Consider creating an IACA subcommittee focused on youth apprenticeship, which could engage employers, K-12 and college CTE communities, community-based organizations and the public workforce system.

### *2 Funding and program development:*

- Collaborate with CDE and CCCCCO to connect CTE leaders and K12 Pathways coordinators with DAS consultants to support stakeholder education and youth apprenticeship program development.
- Issue guidance and technical assistance resources clarifying how apprenticeship sponsors and intermediaries can access financial resources from education and public workforce systems (e.g., K-12 formula funding, student financial aid, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), etc.), to support apprenticeships for opportunity youth and other young people at risk of disconnecting from school and work.

## ***What longer-term action steps can advance this strategy?***

### *1 Definition and quality principles:*

- Incorporate feedback from government agencies and existing youth apprenticeship providers to finalize a definition and quality principles for youth apprenticeship, to guide future state investments and program developments.
- Codify statewide youth apprenticeship definition and principles in state legislation or regulation, to integrate youth apprenticeship into CDE operations, including its Partnership Academies.

### *2 Funding and program development:*

- Create an ongoing interagency working group on youth apprenticeship that includes DAS, CDE, CCCCCO, and other agency staff as appropriate to explore and make recommendations about opportunities for aligning state and federal funding, and technical assistance.
- Build incentives into the CAI grant solicitations and Strong Workforce Program formula funding, to encourage school districts to develop youth apprenticeship programs that begin in high school and confer postsecondary credit.

# Five-Point Action Plan



## 5. Expand State and Local Public Sector Apprenticeships

### *Why is this strategy important?*

Over 1.6 million Californians are employed in the public sector in a wide variety of occupations. Implementing apprenticeships at state and local government agencies—for both incumbents and new workers—would create additional opportunities for Californians to learn transferable skills on the job, often at unionized workplaces. Providing apprenticeship pathways in public sector employment also serves a valuable messaging function, showing that Californian government agencies can practice what they preach.

DAS has already worked with the Government Operations Agency, the State Personnel Board, and CalHR to identify reforms to the state civil service code that are needed to support apprenticeship implementation at state agencies. LWDA should also continue to engage local governments as part of the above-described efforts to support non-traditional and youth apprenticeships through regional consortia

### *What near-term action steps can advance this strategy?*

- Create an inventory of county and municipal governments developing or implementing apprenticeship or other earn-and-learn training strategies. The California State Association of Counties and League of California Cities might be helpful partners for conducting this inventory, and supporting further awareness and program development.
- Create a community of practice for public service apprenticeship practitioners through the IACA civil service subcommittee. Foster collaboration between the civil service subcommittee and IACA subcommittees focused on other non-traditional apprenticeship sectors, such as IT and health care.
- Engage with CalHR to address barriers in early career jobs that could be adjusted, to allow for more entry-level apprenticeships in state civil service.

### *What longer-term action steps can advance this strategy?*

- Identify challenges within state civil service that inhibit growth of apprenticeship and develop a plan to address them with relevant state entities.
- For state service, explore the possibility of the state setting targets or goals for numbers of civil service positions filled through apprenticeship.

### **Case Study:**

#### *SEIU Local 1000 LVN to RN Apprenticeship Program*



California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS) employs thousands of nurses and other medical staff to provide primary care to California’s incarcerated population. CCHCS, like other health care employers, faces a severe nursing shortage, compounded by a lack of capacity through traditional education pathways. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, in 2019 alone, American nursing schools turned away over 80,000 qualified applicants due to shortages of faculty and clinical placements.

In 2016, SEIU Local 1000 partnered with CCHCS and San Joaquin Delta College in the Central Valley to develop a “bridge” apprenticeship program allowing licensed vocational nurses to become registered nurses through a combination of college coursework and paid on-the-job training. The bridge program, which has been supported by CAI grants and is now also available through Sacramento City and Riverside City Colleges, allows apprentice nurses to develop new skills alongside familiar colleagues in their current workplace, all without taking a pay cut.

# Conclusion

Apprenticeship has a proven track record of connecting Californians to good jobs, and the State's investments and policy support for apprenticeship are already the most generous and extensive in the country. Though the challenge of serving 500,000 Californian apprentices by 2029 is unprecedented, existing policies provide a solid foundation for further work to support this ambition. By supporting regional and sectoral intermediaries, expanding non-traditional apprenticeship opportunities, continuing to diversify traditional apprenticeship programs and engaging young people and government employees in new programs, California's apprenticeship system can help even more state residents take part in an economy that works for everyone.

