

Community Colleges, Workforce Development, and Career Pathways

What do statistics reveal about postsecondary entry and completion and gaps, especially among low-income students, students involved in the juvenile justice system, and those with disabilities? How are community colleges playing an important role in increasing access for these populations and others? Participate in a robust discussion on the pressing issues facing students and opportunity youth, emerging innovations in postsecondary systems and the promotion of diverse pathways that prepare young people for postsecondary attainment.

Speakers: **Kermit Kaleba**, National Skills Coalition; **Kirk Lew**, U.S. Department of Labor; **Alicia Bolton**, IEL (moderator)

Alicia Bolton
Project Director
Institute for Educational Leadership



With over 15 years of diversified experience, Alicia is passionate about connecting the dots between data and trends to develop and implement strategies and programming. Spanning K-12 education, real estate, and banking institutions, she brings a unique blend of skills and experiences that all map to her passion for building solutions that drive impact for youth and adult learners. Alicia currently serves as the director of IEL's Adult Career Pathway Design Challenge, which is part of the organization's Minds that Move Us initiative. Through this challenge, ten cross-sector teams

of educators, employers, community organizations, and adult learners from around the country were selected to design innovative career pathway programs for adults 26 and over who do not have any formal postsecondary training or education and lack the skills necessary to put them on a career path. Over the course of the project, teams will partake in a Design Camp, ongoing coaching, and a Career Pathways Festival to pitch their proposed solutions with a chance to win prize money for their creativity. Alicia is a thoughtful leader with a track record of strengthening policies and educational programs on both the national (U.S. Department of Education) and district (D.C. Public Schools) levels. In addition, she has a variety of experiences successfully managing complex projects, designing older youth and adult career programming, overseeing intricate budgets and grants, leading and developing teams, and partnering with a variety of stakeholders to build buy in and diversify funding sources.

Email: boltona@iel.org

Kirk Lew
Supervisor for the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy's Youth Policy Development
U.S. Department of Labor



Kirk A. Lew is the Supervisor for the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy's Youth Policy Development team. Kirk currently oversees over 10 million dollars in investments intended to research, evaluate, implement, and test initiatives that will improve the employment outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities. Kirk currently leads a team of four policy advisors with concentrations in workforce development, career pathways, youth, and family engagement, education, and systems coordination. Kirk participates in several workforce-related policy initiatives that involve key federal partners and national organizations like the Federal Partners in Transition working group. Before coming to ODEP, Kirk has had the privilege of providing case management, job coaching, and mentoring services to New Jersey-based youth and adults transitioning from education and training programs to competitive integrated employment settings. Kirk has worked with a variety of youth populations since starting his professional career as a residential counselor at NJ's Edison Job Corps center. Kirk has managed a supported employment vendor, created several school transition-related programs, and transitioned young adults out of foster care services.

Most recently, Kirk served as a policy advisor for the State of New Jersey's State Workforce Development Board. Kirk concentrated on the policy development and system collaboration around employment topics on youth, disability, and adult literacy.

Email: Lew.Kirk.A@dol.gov

Kermit Kaleba
Managing Director, Policy
National Skills Coalition



As National Skills Coalition's Managing Director of Policy, Kermit directs the organization's Washington-based efforts to advance a national skills strategy within federal legislation, agency regulation and national funding initiatives. Kermit assists state and local leaders in federal policy advocacy both within Washington and in their home districts and works with National Skills Coalition field staff and partner organizations to help improve state and local implementation of federal programs.

Email: kermitk@nationalskillscoalition.org

Twitter: @KermitKalebaNSC

- Resource 1 :
https://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/publications/file/9.18-NSC_QNDC-paper_web.pdf
- Resource 2 :
https://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/publications/file/Investing-in-Postsecondary-Career-Pathways_web.pdf

- Resource 3 : <https://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/federal-policy/body/SFGJ-Community-College-Compact.pdf>