CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE
OCCUPATIONAL CREDENTIAL ANALYSIS STEPS, RESOURCES, & GLOSSARY

Steps and Resources to Support Building an Asset Map of Local Credentials

1. Indentify In-Demand Industry Sector

Analyze monthly and quarterly industry employment data from BLS and states to identify which industries are currently showing growth (as opposed to projections)

- Current Employment Statistics (CES) at: http://www.bls.gov/ces/

- Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Business Employment Dynamics: http://www.bls.gov/news.release/cewbd.toc.htm

2. Identify Local Employers in Industry Sector

Use Employer Locator (COS)

- to identify local firms in growing industries: http://www.careerinfonet.org/employerlocator/employerlocator.asp?nodeid=18

- to identify the industry sector of a specific local employer: http://www.careerinfonet.org/employerlocator/EmpLocatorByKeyword.asp?nodeid=18&action=keyword

3. List Key Occupations

Use BLS industry staffing patterns to identify key occupations in those industry sectors
- http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrci.htm

- http://www.mynextmove.org/

- http://online.onetcenter.org/

4. Identify, Sort and Classify Credentials for Occupations

Determine Whether the Occupation Is Licensed
- Link to Licensed Occupation Finder http://www.careerinfonet.org/licensedoccupations/lois_keyword.asp?nodeid=16&by=keyword

If the occupation is licensed:
- Find out licensing requirement—is a specific credential required—certificate, degree, or certification.

Determine whether there is a certification that goes with this occupation
- Link to Certification Finder http://www.careerinfonet.org/certifications_new/default.aspx

- Print out information on the certification(s) and save in binder and as an electronic file

- Record the name of the certification and the institution that awards and set aside. At a later step, you will validate with employers whether they use this certification in hiring/promotion decisions.

Determine whether the occupation is part of an Apprenticeship Program
- Link to Apprenticeship Program Finder http://oa.doleta.gov/bat.cfm

- Print out and save local apprenticeship program information for future reference

Identify local education and training providers that provide training in this area
- Link to Programs at Community Colleges (on Career One Stop)

- Link to Education and Training http://www.careerinfonet.org/edutraining/

- Type in Occupation

- Type in State

- Go to website of community colleges/training providers to learn details (is it a certificate program; is it for credit; what are related courses or programs, etc).

Record names of training provider and type of credential (license, certification, certificate, educational degree, apprenticeship certificate) on worksheet or print out page and save in binder and electronically

5. Validate Credentials with Employers and Training Providers

Contact local education and training providers to confirm credential programs offered at community colleges and training programs. Ask local employers to validate there is job growth in their organizations and that the credentials offered support hiring and promotions of individuals along the career pathway.

Glossary of Terms

Credentials
Many different types of credentials are awarded or offered by different agencies and organizations. Understanding the difference characteristics of each type of credential and the "doorway" they provide to those who earn them can be confusing.

According to Attachment II of Training and Employment Guidance Letter 15-10, a credential attests to qualification or competence and is issued to an individual by a third party with the relevant authority or jurisdiction to issue such credentials (such as an accredited educational institution, an industry recognized association, or an occupational association or professional society) (p. 1).

The guide defines each of the following different types of credentials in depth:
1. Educational diplomas, certificates and degrees;
2. Registered apprenticeship certificates;
3. Occupational licenses (typically awarded by State government agencies);
4. Personnel certifications from industry or professional associations; and
5. Other skill certificates for specific skill sets or competencies within one or more industries or occupations (e.g. writing, leadership, etc.). (p.1).

The following glossary provides brief definitions for different types of credentials. Extended definitions of each are found in Attachment 2 of TEGL 15-10, the *"Credential Resource Guide"*, available online at http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL15-10a2.pdf. The page numbers of each definition are listed below.

Certificate: A formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of a postsecondary education program (p. 2).

Degree: An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for the successful completion of the program of studies (p. 3).

Certification/Personnel Certification: A certification indicates that the individual has acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, and sometimes personal attributes (based on a formal study) to perform a specific occupation or skill. Personnel Certifications are granted by third party, non-governmental agencies (usually associations and by companies) and are intended to set professional standards for qualifications (p. 5).

Apprenticeship Certificate: An award certifying the completion of an apprenticeship program. Apprenticeship Certificates are issued by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency. The Apprenticeship system offers two types of credentials: 1) certificate of completion of an apprenticeship program, and 2) interim credentials (p. 4).

License/Occupational License: Common characteristics of occupations licenses include that they are: granted by Federal, state, or local government agencies; mandatory in the relevant jurisdiction; intended to set professional standards and ensure safety and quality of work; required in addition to other credentials; defined by laws and regulations; and time-limited. Violation of the terms of the license can result in legal action (p. 5).

Definitions of Career-Enhancing Credentials

Industry-Recognized Credential: Industry-recognized credentials are either developed or endorsed by a nationally-recognized industry association or organization and are sought or accepted by companies within the industry sector for purposes of hiring or recruitment (p. 6).

Stackable: A credential that is part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications are considered stackable. Typically, stackable credentials help individuals move up a career ladder or along a career pathway to different and potentially higher-paying jobs (p. 6).

Portable: Credentials that are recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings - either in other geographic areas, at other educational institutions, or by other industries or employing companies are considered portable (p. 7).