



Research and Evaluation Notes

December 2023

To support the public workforce system's research and evaluation (R&E) efforts, these notes share:

- Select R&E initiatives, reports, and resources relevant to the nation's workforce development system, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, services, and customers.
- Technical assistance (TA) information to support positive customer and service delivery outcomes through research, evaluation, and evidence-based program design.

Highlights from this issue:

- Three briefs from the Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio which explore the strategies, models, and partnerships in registered apprenticeships.
- The Research Publications database of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Division of Research and Evaluation has recently been revamped, introducing new features allowing users to browse, search, and download over 550 publications.
- New evidence highlighting the nontraditional occupations with the highest income growth for registered apprentices.

SELECT READING

[Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio](#)

Recent evaluation findings reveal how apprenticeships serve women, youth, and veterans in a series of reports that expand the evidence-based portfolio for registered apprenticeship programs.

While the number of women continues to increase in non-traditional occupations, they are still underrepresented in registered apprenticeship programs, according to a report on [Women in Apprenticeships and Nontraditional Occupations \(WANTO\)](#). The implementation study examines how the WANTO grantees support the entry of women into occupations where they have been underrepresented, including construction, energy, advanced manufacturing, and information technology.

To provide career pathways for transitioning service members (TSMs) and their spouses, DOL's Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) launched the Apprenticeship Pilot. The two primary goals of the pilot "were to support application to apprenticeships and placement into registered or unregistered apprenticeships." The [Implementation Evaluation of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service \(VETS\) Apprenticeship Pilot](#) found that due to the pandemic, workshop briefings were revised to convey consistent messaging about the pilot, and recruitment grew over time; staff shifted the approach to relying on coordinators hired to directly engage employers; and while outcomes were limited, the experience of the pilot offers several lessons to expand apprenticeships to TSMs.

According to a paper produced to contextualize the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants (YARG) program, youth apprentices comprise 30 to 40 percent of all apprentices each year. The report, [Youth Apprenticeship in the United States](#), discusses implementation issues and summarizes noteworthy features and activities planned by YARG grantees.

Several additional reports are now included in the [Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio](#), including [Understanding the Capacity of State Apprenticeship Systems](#), [State Incentives to Promote and Support Apprenticeship: Takeaways from Eight States](#), [Models of Youth Registered Apprenticeship Expansion: Evidence from the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants](#), and [How the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected State Apprenticeship Systems: Takeaways from Eight States](#).

SPOTLIGHT

New Events:

- [National Association of Workforce Boards Forums](#). The theme for the upcoming forum (March 23–26, 2024) is "Forging Tomorrow's Workforce Today." This annual event allows workforce leaders to network with peers; learn about current workforce policies, initiatives, and trends; and enhance their skills to deepen their understanding of WIOA.
- [2023 National Association of State Workforce Agencies Summit](#). Held September 13–14, the summit focused on embracing the opportunity for growth, undergoing transformational journeys to adapt to changing demands, and utilizing innovation to navigate new challenges. Presenters addressed integrating customer experience, teacher apprenticeships in multiple states, and labor market participation, among other topics.

EVIDENCE IN ACTION

[Employment and Training Administration Research Publications Page](#)

DOL's Employment and Training Administration, Division of Research and Evaluation, recently launched a revitalized portal with new design features to browse, search, and download more than 550 publications. Browse the portal to search for recent and rigorous research on workforce-related topics in the [Research Publications](#) database. Enhanced features can help you find reports filtered by research date, populations served, program, and methodology. For more efficient searches, be sure to use the "Search and Filter tips" option. Stay updated on new releases by clicking ["Subscribe to Email"](#).

You can also visit the [Workforce Systems Strategies \(WSS\)](#) Community Resources Library to find other evidence-based research, emerging program practices and useful tools / guides. A useful fact sheet, [Evidence-Based Practices for Evaluation](#) in WSS, offers instructive steps to help you explore more than 900 R&E reports. The fact sheet also shares examples of evaluations, such as the [Youth CareerConnect Impact Findings Report \(2019\)](#) and the [Providing Employment Services to the Long-Term Unemployed: Implementation Final Report \(2021\)](#).

RESEARCH IN LIVING COLOR

According to the report, [Expanding Registered Apprenticeship to Underrepresented Populations: Findings from the American Apprenticeship Initiative](#), apprentices in nontraditional occupations - those outside the construction trades where apprenticeships have been historically concentrated - experienced the most significant earnings growth. Registered nurses experienced the largest growth in earnings, followed by computer network specialists in information technology, and bus drivers (i.e., "other transportation" occupations). These notable increases may be attributed to the influx of new workers in the information technology sector and lower pre-program earnings for healthcare occupations. The infographic below is from the [Learning while Earning: Apprenticeship Experiences and Outcomes from the American Apprenticeship Initiative](#) brief.

AAI apprentices who enrolled in nontraditional occupations experienced the highest earnings growth between the year prior to their program and the year following completion.

Top 3 Occupations for Earnings Growth

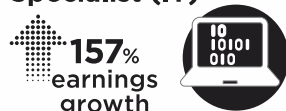
Registered Nurse (healthcare)



Pre-apprenticeship earnings \$15,056

Post-apprenticeship earnings \$82,745

Computer Network Specialist (IT)



Pre-apprenticeship earnings \$25,011

Post-apprenticeship earnings \$64,296

Bus Driver ("other"—transportation)



Pre-apprenticeship earnings \$28,419

Post-apprenticeship earnings \$69,204

Note: The period between apprenticeship start date and end date was 2.7 years, on average; it was longest for construction (4.2 years) and shortest for healthcare (1.2 years).

Source: National Directory of New Hires, as reported in Walton, Gardiner and Barnow. 2022. *Expanding Apprenticeship to New Sectors and Populations: The Experiences and Outcomes of Apprentices in the American Apprenticeship Initiative*, Exhibit 4-10.

Source: Learning While Earning: Apprenticeship Experiences and Outcomes from the American Apprenticeship Initiative. Infographic adapted from Walton, Gardiner, and Barnow. *Expanding Apprenticeship to New Sectors and Partnerships: The Experience and Outcomes of Apprentices in the American Apprenticeship Initiative*. Exhibit 4-10. Abt Associates, 2022.

Share research and evaluation questions, suggestions, and resource needs with the Employment and Training Administration's Office of Policy Development and Research at workforcepractices@dol.gov. Archived [Research and Evaluation Notes](#) are available at the [Evaluation and Research Hub](#) in WorkforceGPS.