



Investments in Dev Ed Reform, Rural Workforce Training Among \$17 Million+ in Recently Approved Grants

Ascendium recently approved nine new grants totaling over \$17 million. These grants support a range of initiatives designed to help learners from low-income backgrounds, including developmental education reform, expanding pathways to upwardly mobile careers in information technology and the scaling of proven strategies to improve transfer outcomes. [Read more...](#)



Merit America Skills Training Programs Generate Upward Socioeconomic Mobility

Postsecondary education and workforce training is not one-size-fits-all. Nearly two-thirds of American workers don't have a degree, work full time and need a route to better jobs. Diverse education and training pathways help meet the needs of these historically underserved students. Merit America, a national nonprofit that prepares individuals without four-year degrees for family-sustaining careers in tech, offers a promising way forward. Ascendium will support Merit America in scaling its skills training and career placement programs in IT support, data analytics and Java web development. [Read more...](#)

New Resources

Our grant partners regularly create resources that benefit organizations focused on student success. These resources are published to our [Resource Library](#) often; here's what's new this month.

- [College Completion Strategy Guide](#) (MDRC)
- [Preparing Rural Americans for the Postpandemic Economy: Lessons from Utah](#) (The Conference Board)
- [Rural Learning Systems: Improving Economic Opportunity in Rural Taos County](#) (Columbus Learning Center Management Corporation)
- [Rural Learning Systems: Regional Collaborative Changing Systems for Adults in Northern California](#) (Columbus Learning Center Management Corporation)
- [Structuring STEM Transfer Partnership Success: Report #1](#) (University of Washington)

Recent Grants

Streamline Key Learner Transitions

Exploring Geographic Isolation as a Barrier to Equitable Transfer Outcomes
The RP Group Inc. | \$164,900 | 11/2022 - 02/2024

This grant supports The RP Group in assessing the role of proximity to four-year institutions in the transfer outcomes of low-income and Latinx students in California. The goal is to identify ways to strengthen transfer policy and practice, particularly in states with large rural areas not well served by broad access four-year institutions.

Connected Pathways for Tribal Colleges and Universities
Wakiya Foundation Inc. | \$750,000 | 11/2022 - 09/2024

This grant supports the Wakiya Foundation in developing new, career-aligned bachelor's degree programs at tribal colleges in Montana. In partnership with Western Governors University (WGU), Wakiya will use labor market data to identify in-demand jobs for which no postsecondary education programs currently exist for tribal learners. They will fill those gaps through offerings delivered jointly by the tribal colleges and WGU.

Support Rural Postsecondary Education and Workforce Training

AA-to-BA Transfer Apprenticeship Pathway for Rural Talent
Reach Institute for School Leadership | \$600,000 | 11/2022 - 05/2024

This grant supports Reach University in building career pathways between rural community colleges and school districts in four states. The goal is to provide rural learners from low-income backgrounds with job-embedded training that leads to a bachelor's degree and employment in high-quality, high-demand jobs in the education sector.

Field Support and Development

Future U. Podcast
Academic Intelligence | \$55,000 | 09/2022 - 06/2023

This grant supports Academic Intelligence's production of the Future U. podcast series featuring interviews and stories about topics related to removing barriers to success in postsecondary education.

CompetencyXchange Task Force
Competency-Based Education Network | \$50,000 | 10/2022 - 07/2023

This grant supports the Competency-Based Education Network in engaging key stakeholders to develop a plan to implement competency-based education across the nation.

On the Go: Find Ascendium Staff in the Field

Ascendium is committed to the safety of our staff and will continue to monitor and follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidance regarding travel. We look forward to seeing you at upcoming virtual and in-person events.

Alliance for Higher Education in Prison: Virtual 12th National Conference on Higher Education in Prison
Oct. 11-14, 2022

Grantmakers for Education: Annual Conference

Austin, TX
Oct. 18-20, 2022

- Keith Witham, presenter, "Seeding Innovation in Response to Emergent Challenges"
- Maryann Rainey and Molly Lasagna, presenters, "How Funders Can Support Equity and Success for Incarcerated Learners"

- Ascendium Education Group, reception, "Education Behind and Beyond the Walls: An Evening with Leaders from the Field of Higher Education in Prison"

National Rural Education Association: National Forum to Advance Rural Education

Green Bay, WI/Virtual
Oct. 20-21, 2022

Complete College America: 2022 Annual Convening

Atlanta, GA
Oct. 24-25, 2022

Workforce Matters: Further Together

Washington, D.C.
Nov. 14-16, 2022

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning: Annual Conference

Chicago, IL
Nov. 16-18, 2022

Association for the Study of Higher Education: Annual Conference

Las Vegas, NV
Nov. 16-19, 2022

Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management: 2022 Fall Conference on Advancing Policy Research with Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives

Washington, D.C.
Nov. 17-19, 2022

Mission Investors Exchange: 2022 National Conference

Baltimore, MD
Dec. 5-7, 2022

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