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Apprenticeship Re-Imagined

In early October of this past year, the U.S. House Education and Labor Committee passed legislation reauthorizing the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA), which had not been substantively updated since it passed more than 80 years ago. This renovation calls for \$3.5 billion in new spending over the next five years toward registered apprenticeships managed by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the states.

We may not agree on everything, but we acknowledge the evidence that the registered apprenticeship program is successful. The DOL notes that 94 percent of apprentices who complete their programs are employed upon completion, and earn an average starting wage of above \$70,000 annually. Here's the disconnect - only 0.3 percent of the overall U.S. workforce has participated in apprenticeship. What's with that? And what are the implications for workforce development in Central New York?

The news is both good and bad, as usual. This legislation has yet to see its day of debate in the U.S. Senate; it has not yet been codified. Lawmakers of all stripes agree that apprenticeship is worth investment. Both outgoing and incoming administrations have been/are in support of this time-tested career training strategy.

And in Central New York? The MACNY Workforce Development team continues to look for ways to grow and expand our registered apprenticeship programs and, by extension, to strengthen career pathways. One of these is through collaborative partnerships, like our work with Jobs for the Future (JFF), a national nonprofit organization whose mission it is to “drive changes in the American workforce and education systems to achieve economic advancement for all.”

You may not be aware of how important MACNY's participation with JFF has been over the past several years. The U.S. DOL tasks JFF to execute resources designated by Congress to strengthen our workforce and create equitable career paths across the country. MACNY's Director of Apprenticeship, Martha Ponge, through her activity with the nationwide workforce development community, has placed MACNY and the Manufacturers Alliance of New York State squarely at the table of all conversations regarding where to invest these funds. What that means to you and me is that taxpayers' (our) money finds its way back from the federal government to New York State and Central New York in the form of apprenticeship expansion and a better sustained workforce.

Following the news that the JFF grant had been re-established for 2021, Ponge and the MACNY Apprenticeship team joined our other grant partners in collaboration to discuss strategies for the upcoming year. Understanding that the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked economic devastation and magnified deeply ingrained inequality, JFF has called for transformation along these key areas:

- Connect the Unemployed to Opportunities
- Build an Equitable Economic Recovery
- Mobilize Corporate Leadership
- Drive Technology Innovation
- Reimagine Education and Workforce Development

We are excited to work with these dedicated workforce professionals as we endeavor to help preserve and strengthen apprenticeship, the momentum for which has experienced the lag that often results from an economic downturn. Our tasks are:

- to continue to advocate for apprenticeship at every level of government
- to work on expanding access to apprenticeships
- to advance youth apprenticeship
- to work with employers and workers to navigate this current crisis, to reimagine their programs rather than cutting them altogether

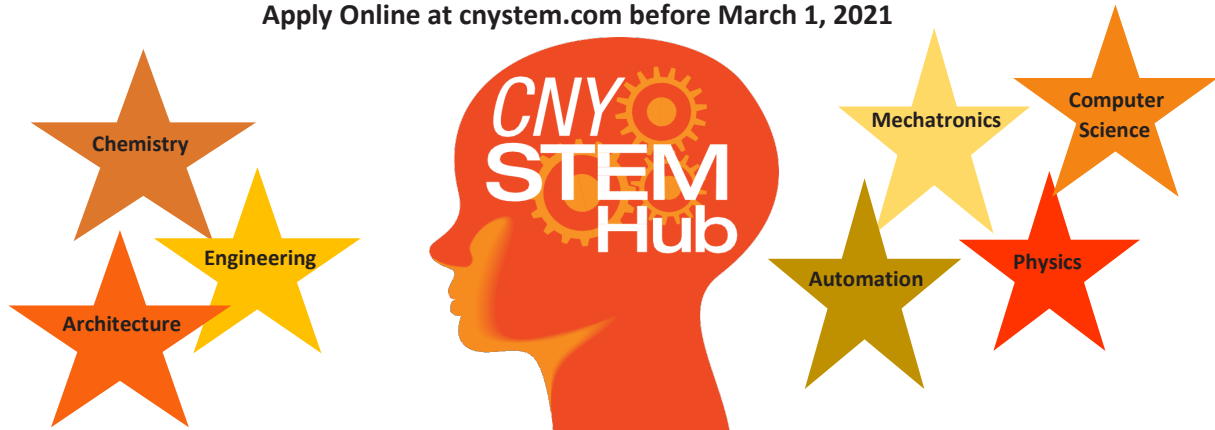
Interest in apprenticeship has increased over the past five years; we are working to ensure that this trajectory continues. Stay tuned for more reporting on our work with JFF and other workforce development stakeholders. 2021 will see the rollout of innovative incumbent worker training, the deepening of our efforts at the youth apprenticeship level, and our involvement in addressing opportunities for under-represented groups in our communities across New York State and beyond.







We couldn't be more optimistic about the coming new year. Visit macny.org for more information on apprenticeship and let us know how we can help you strengthen and expand your workforce in 2021.

9 CNY STEM SCHOLARSHIPS

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three scholarships of \$5,000 per year for four years • Computer Science, Software or Electrical Engineering majors will be considered • Two scholarships will be focused on minority and female applicants 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two scholarships of \$2,000 per year for four years • Mechanical or Electrical Engineering majors will be considered 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One scholarship of \$2,000 per year for four years • Students intending to study Architecture will be considered 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One scholarship of \$2,000 per year for four years • Electrical, Automation or Process Engineering majors considered • Oswego & Onondaga County residents will be given preference 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One scholarship of \$1,000 per year for four years • Students intending to study Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Material Science will be considered 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One scholarship of \$2,000 per year for two years • Mechatronics majors will be considered • Students from the VWS and Oneida districts will be given preference
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