

Secretaries' Innovation Group

Earl Buford, President
CAEL

Dec. 11, 2024



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Experience and expertise includes:

- Youth-oriented workforce development programs.
- Building diverse, cross-sector partnerships that align traditionally siloed stakeholders, including workforce developers, employers, unions, educators, and trainers, to develop holistic upskilling and reskilling programs.
- More than \$100 million raised in support of nonprofits and major workforce systems.



"Every unfilled job is a missed opportunity for an employer to grow, for an individual to thrive, and for a region or state to prosper."

Selected Career Highlights

- Led **Partner4Work** in revitalizing Pittsburgh's public workforce system, shifting the annual budget from reliance on WIOA funding to a blended base of public and private resources. Created strategic plan for Industry Advisory Partnerships comprised of employers and industry partners across nine sectors, with a focus on work-based learning.
- As CEO of **Employ Milwaukee**, pioneered sector-based workforce development strategies and led the development of Industry Advisory Boards to sustain holistic employer engagement. Created **Midwest Urban Strategies**, a national consortium of urban workforce boards, building an innovative supply-demand model to cultivate talent development and employer engagement in Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Detroit, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis and with the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Headed **WRTP/BIG STEP**, which focuses on diverse workforce recruitment in growth sectors, including specialized engagement with recent high school graduates. Created the first new U.S. manufacturing apprenticeship in 20 years through a labor-management advisory council, the IMT, born in Wisconsin and later launched nationally. Placed more than 10,000 individuals in roles averaging \$23 in hourly wages.
- Served on Governor Scott Walker's Task Force on Minority Unemployment, the State of Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council, and on Vice President Joe Biden's Advisory Taskforce on Effective Workforce Development.

In Addition To Leading CAEL:

Buford is a member of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland's Pittsburgh Board of Directors and serves on boards for the following organizations:

- National Fund for Workforce Solutions.
- Apprenticeships for America.
- Catalyst Connection (a manufacturing extension partnership).
- Bridgeway Capital (a CDFI).
- Strada Education Network's National Strategic Advisory Group focused on identifying opportunities to improve the benefits of education and training after high school.

His published works include *Connecting People to Work: Workforce Intermediaries and Sector Strategies* and *The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership: The Evolution of an Intermediary, the Shifting Target of Twenty-First Century Manufacturing, and the Continuing Relevance of Unions in Labor Markets*.

Rachel Hirsch, VP of Public Partnerships

Expands CAEL's relationship with policymakers by surfacing common goals and initiatives to engage public sector stakeholders with the organization's vision and mission. Also directs the work of CAEL's SNAP Education & Training grant initiative.

- Over 100 community colleges engaged thus far; ongoing work in Arizona, Montana, Nebraska, Texas, Wisconsin, and more.

Has a history of facilitating and forging partnerships across government, nonprofit, and the private sector to achieve common goals, and she also works at building broad support for reform and leads engagement with various state-level and government entities. Brings attention to these issues through speaking engagements across the country and has authored several publications on numerous topics in the field, from work-based learning to financial aid.

Prior to CAEL:

- National Governors Association
 - Led work on: work-based learning, apprenticeships, community colleges, SNAP E&T, higher education in prisons, reskilling, and recovery during COVID-19.
- National Skills Coalition
 - Led work on: broad-based coalition building in states to implement and expand workforce development-related policies.



How We Engage

An Ecosystem Approach:

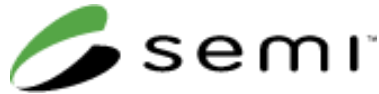
We help organizations succeed by providing expertise, resources, and innovative solutions that effectively support adult learners as they navigate on- and off- ramps between education and employment.



Current Funding Partners



JPMORGAN CHASE & Co.



U.S. Department of Education



Career Pathway Navigation

\$4.9 million U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant

- More than 1,000 students have actively participated in XP, a career awareness platform for high school students and other young adults, across six pilot sites.

Semiconductor career exploration platform

- CAEL partnered with SEMI Foundation to launch a similar career exploration resource.
- The interactive platforms create an inclusive, relatable, and welcoming user experience, with features like skills and interest inventories to match user competencies and interests with pathways likely to lead to career success and personal fulfillment.

Employer Career Advising App

- CAEL partnered with a major U.S. employer on a program that offers employees an array of education benefits, including ESL classes, high school completion, college tuition assistance, and free education advising.
- The app includes interest assessments, skill gap analysis, career pathway information, and a career-adviser interface to help employees maximize benefits and their professional development. It supports an education and training program used by more than 60,000 workers.

EPCE and NACTEL Sector Partnerships

The Energy Providers Coalition for Education and the National Alliance for Communications, Technology, Education and Learning

- Sector-tailored credentials ranging from badges to advanced degrees.
- Alliances include unions, employers, professional associations, and more.
- More than 27,000 learners have been upskilled and/or credentialed through EPCE and NACTEL programs.



AT&T



LUMEN[®]



Link Learning and Work

CWA



EPCE Association Members



200+ utilities are members



2000+ utilities members are members



900+ cooperatives are members



Build Better Careers



Truist Foundation approached CAEL to develop strategies that:

- Provide the tools job seekers, workforce organizations, educators and trainers, and service providers need to ensure underrepresented individuals can secure a position and prosper within given industries.
- Strengthen financial services career pathways in five key cities/regions.

The six-year Build Better Career program currently includes 50 employers, 10 workforce organizations, 21 higher education institutions, and 39 dedicated community organizations. It has thus far engaged with more than 26,000 individuals.

Grant: Nearly \$16M

CAEL Receives \$15.7 Million Grant From Truist Foundation to Strengthen Financial Services Career Pathways

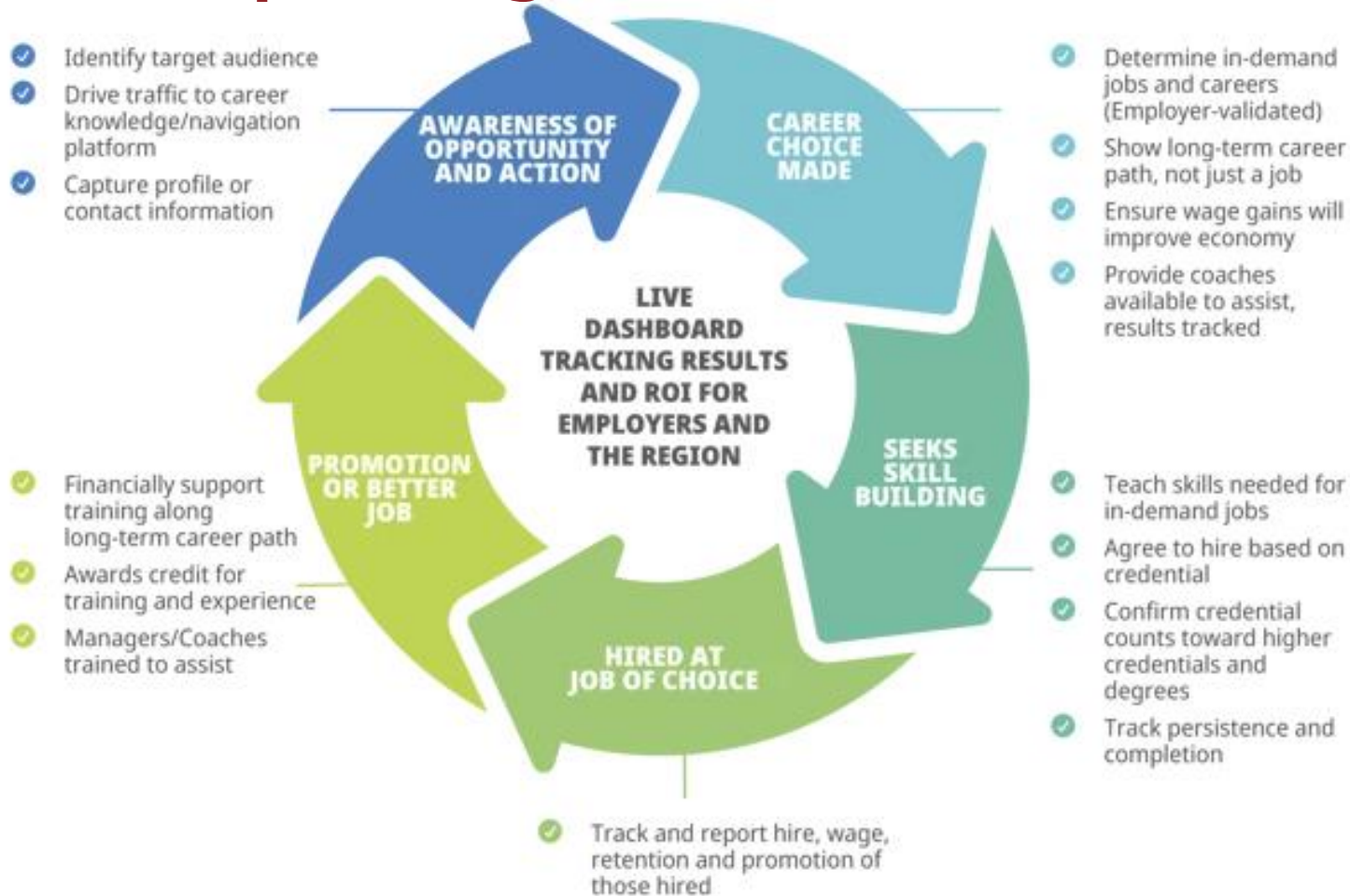
CAEL / May 9, 2022

Partnership with Council for Adult and Experiential Learning will establish support and training for adult learners entering financial services and adjacent industries

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), a nonprofit organization helping adult learners navigate on- and off-ramps between education and employment, announced today it has been awarded a \$15.7 million grant from Truist Foundation. The CAEL and Truist Foundation partnership encompasses a six-year multicity initiative that prioritizes Black, Indigenous, and persons of color (BIPOC) as well as underserved communities by building career paths in professions and industries historically unavailable to them, such as financial services.



Regional Upskilling Alliance Framework (RUA)



RUA Participant Journey



Participant Outreach,
Recruitment



Goal Setting, Decision
Making



Supportive Services



Learning, Credentialing



Documenting Skills,
Credentials



Job Placement



Ongoing Learning,
Advancement

Thank You!

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Rachel Hirsch
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Recognizing that adult learners are the backbone of the U.S. economy, CAEL helps forge a clear, viable connection between education and career success, providing solutions that promote sustainable and equitable economic growth. CAEL opens doors to opportunity in collaboration with workforce and economic developers, postsecondary educators, employers and industry groups, and foundations and other mission-aligned organizations. By engaging with these stakeholders, CAEL fosters a culture of innovative, lifelong learning that helps individuals, and their communities thrive. Established in 1974, CAEL, a Strada Education Network affiliate, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) membership organization.

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