

## Community Focus Statement D: Provide a thriving and vibrant local small business environment.

### D3

**Action Statement D.3: Establish mountain-wide regional collaborative relationships between employers and high schools and local public or local non-profit junior colleges such as San Bernardino Valley College and Crafton Hills College to offer low-cost credentialing and certification programs to increase educational opportunities for employees to gain job skills.**

**Benchmark:** A certification program for extended learning opportunities is available.

**Champion:** Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

**Estimated Cost:** Dependent upon partners and scope of the partnership.



Credentialing and certifications are fast becoming an important gauge for employers in terms of overall hiring qualifications. The high school diploma can no longer command a living wage. Targeted credentialing or certification programs allow secondary schools and local colleges to match skilled workers with open positions, thus providing employers with a larger pool of highly skilled candidates and individuals with career skills and access to higher-wage employment opportunities.

These programs often include a link between training, certification, and job placement. Typically the programs partner with individual businesses or business coalitions. Training and certification is typically done through existing training providers such as local high school vocational programs, San Bernardino Valley College, or Crafton Hills College. Several for-profit institutions also offer credentialing programs, but recent studies have shown that their effectiveness is questionable due to high rates of student loan debt, non-acceptance of credentials or certificates by employers, and low completion rates. This is not true of all for-profit programs, and partnerships should assess tuition fees and the performance of any prospective partner training provider.

Case management should follow the participant from initial enrollment through the job placement process. Some programs actually include internship opportunities prior to full-time job placement for on-site worker training and experience.

Targeted credentialing or certification programs can be coordinated by local school districts, chambers of commerce, or labor unions. The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) is charged with

coordinating workforce development for the County under the auspices of the federal Workforce Investment Act. Collaboration with the WIB will be important to developing a successful, effective, and sustainable program.

The Competency Model Clearinghouse at the Arkansas Workforce Center ([www.onestop.org](http://www.onestop.org)) has developed a hospitality, tourism, and events competency model for workforce training and credentialing in the tourism and hospitality industry. The model identifies and tiers the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for various levels of industry workers and lays out programs for curriculum development and life-long learning.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Identify an Education Task Force who is responsible for coordination with local schools.	Champion	Month 1	Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce
2. Create marketing materials with research on existing programs and case studies to share with potential school sites.	Education Task Force	Month 2–3	<a href="http://lakearrowheadchamber.com/">http://lakearrowheadchamber.com/</a>
3. Establish points of contact with local schools to develop interest and identify key stakeholders.	Education Task Force	Month 3	San Bernardino County Office of Education <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/sd/details.asp?cds=36103630000000&amp;public=Y">http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/sd/details.asp?cds=36103630000000&amp;public=Y</a>
4. Develop a pilot program, including topic, professor, location, time, and duration (number of weeks).	Education Task Force	Months 3–6	CSU San Bernardino Extended Learning Programs
5. Publicize the program three months ahead of the start date.	Education Task Force	Months 6–9	<a href="http://bulletin.csusb.edu/extended-learning/">http://bulletin.csusb.edu/extended-learning/</a>
6. Evaluate the full session of classes and determine if expansion is possible.	Education Task Force	On-going	Educational Materials <a href="http://www.knappinternational.com/assets/uploads/pages/designing(1).pdf">http://www.knappinternational.com/assets/uploads/pages/designing(1).pdf</a>