



TRANSITION POINTS

The Education Strategy Group Newsletter

Launching the REACH Collaborative to Increase Attainment for Adult Learners of Color

As the nation recovers from the pandemic, adult, post-traditional learners need reskilling to establish economic stability and facilitate career growth. With support from [Lumina Foundation](#), ESG is pleased to launch the Racial Equity for Adult Credentials in Higher Ed (REACH) Collaborative aimed at



achieving a two percent increase in credential attainment among adult learners of color, aged 25-64. The REACH Collaborative will focus on aligning high quality credentials of value and prior learning systems to degrees that lead to employment opportunities for adult learners, including bundling and sequencing student supports (academic, financial, and holistic) and dismantling barriers that contribute to disparate outcomes.

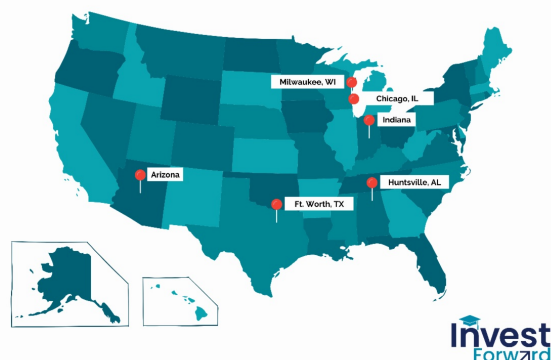
ESG and its partners at the [Office of Community College Research and Leadership \(OCCRL\)](#) at the University of Illinois will work with a network of six state Student Success Centers, system offices, and nearly 200 community colleges in [California](#), [Colorado](#), [New York](#), [North Carolina](#), [Texas](#), and [Virginia](#) to prioritize racial equity in adult credential attainment. To learn more about this transformative effort, check out [Lumina's announcement](#), ESG's [Featured Work](#), or contact us at info@REACHCollab.org.

[READ THE PRESS RELEASE](#)

[READ LUMINA'S BLOG ABOUT REACH](#)

Promising K-12 Stimulus Investments to Support Postsecondary Pathways to Success

District and state leaders have a prime opportunity with the American Recovery Plan to ***Invest Forward*** and support students' pathways to postsecondary and career success. As state and local spending plans are released, proposed investments in pathways strategies are captured on the [Invest Forward site](#).



While many of these plans are still in draft form, there are a number of promising ideas that deserve recognition:

[Fort Worth ISD \(TX\)](#) will create Freshmen Success Teams at all schools to support students staying on track in 9th grade.

[Huntsville City Schools \(AL\)](#) will embed weekly college and career advising sessions into the school day and increase support for college-bound students that includes intensive coaching through the application and financial aid process, a College Crash Course, college visits, and financial aid sessions for parents.

[Chicago Public Schools \(IL\)](#) will create a new Work-Based Learning Center and partner with the City Colleges of Chicago to provide work-based learning opportunities.

[Milwaukee Public Schools \(WI\)](#) will offer camps to prepare students for AP and college-level courses, expand dual enrollment, fund transportation for on-campus dual enrollment courses, and help pay for books, materials, and teacher certifications for advanced courses.

[Indiana](#) will create a Regional Pathways Innovation Fund that will offer competitive grants to encourage K-12 leaders to partner with local community organizations and employers to design and execute career pathway programs.

[Arizona](#) will partner with AdviseAZ AmeriCorps to place current college students and recent college graduates as part-time advisors in high schools across the state and will leverage an artificial-intelligence chatbot to assist students in completing the FAFSA.

On a weekly basis, ESG and our collaborators share relevant evidence and promising examples aligned to the four Invest Forward [key pillars](#). Follow along on [Twitter](#) and engage in the conversation using the hashtag [#InvestForward](#). Additionally, visit the site to access 20+ shovel-ready investment strategies and relevant resources for encouraging investment in your community, such as guidance for how [parents and families](#), [business leaders](#), and [education advocacy organizations](#) can support pathways investments.

And ESG continues to recommend approaches for deepening support. Drawing upon lessons from our partnership with Kentucky's [Commonwealth Education Continuum](#), a collaborative effort of the K-12, higher education, and workforce leadership, Associate Briana Falduti recently released [a blog](#) on how states can leverage their stimulus funds to greatly expand postsecondary advising.

[ACCESS THE INVEST FORWARD WEBSITE](#)
[READ ESG'S BLOG ON POTENTIAL STIMULUS ADVISING INVESTMENTS](#)

ARC Adult-Ready Playbook: ICYMI



This month, ESG released [Accelerating Recovery through Credentials Adult-Ready Playbook](#), the first resource that pulls together the most promising strategies for serving post-traditional learners into a single, comprehensive framework to re- envision education for this population. This playbook puts forward a holistic and reform-minded process that higher

education leaders can use to refocus education and training systems to meet the needs of a very diverse population of adult learners; it can be used to harness lessons learned in order to achieve a more adult-ready system of higher education. The availability of federal stimulus

funds and other potential investments in higher education and training that could flow out of the infrastructure package being discussed provides an opportunity for institutions, systems, and states to invest in systems and policies to serve these students and commit to the pursuit of equitable outcomes for all learners. On September 16th, ESG hosted a webinar to hear from leaders in the field about how they are taking on this agenda. A recording of the webinar is available on the ESG site.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLAYBOOK](#)
[ACCESS THE RECORDING OF THE WEBINAR](#)

From the Data Quality Campaign: The Consumer's Guide to Data

Now more than ever before, school districts, educators, and postsecondary institutions rely on data to inform decisions, make changes, and track trends. Data can be a powerful tool, but like any tool, it is imperfect. The way



in which data are produced and consumed can have significant impacts on their perceived value and use. [The Consumer's Guide to Data](#)—a new resource from the Data Quality Campaign—provides tools for state and district leaders to build trust in the data they use and share. This is especially important as leaders from across the country work to make data-informed decisions about how best to support students' on their paths to postsecondary and career success.

ESG Highlights: Meet Our Newest Team Members

ESG is thrilled to have recently welcomed several new staff members! Get to know two of them below.



Laura Torres, Senior Associate

Laura Torres joined ESG in 2021 to support the work on career readiness and aligning high quality K-12, postsecondary, and industry pathways. Prior to joining ESG, Laura served as a Statewide CTE Coordinator within the Texas Education Agency, where she oversaw the creation and implementation of the Energy Cluster for Texas high school students. In addition, she provided technical assistance for the Information Technology, Energy, and STEM clusters as well as managed contracts with an emphasis on statewide toolkits and online teacher resources. She also served as the CTE Special Populations liaison. During this time, Laura also served on the Advanced CTE Equity Kitchen Cabinet, CompTIA National CTE Council, and the Texas Student-Centered Transition Network. [Learn more about Laura.](#)

Samantha Perez, Associate Director

Samantha Perez joined ESG in 2021 as an Associate Director, and supports a diverse portfolio of initiatives aimed at ensuring that K-12 and postsecondary students complete their education equipped with the knowledge, skills, and networks needed to be successful in



the labor market. Samantha comes to ESG from the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, where she was the Vice President of Education Initiatives. In her role, she led the organization's work in P-12 education and ensured the business community's active and ongoing engagement in public education. She was also the project manager and site lead for the New Skills Ready grant, a multi-year, multi-million dollar investment from JP Morgan Chase into the Nashville community to design, build, and transform career pathways. [Learn more about Samantha.](#)

Join Our Team

ESG is hiring! We are looking for two outstanding leaders to join our team. First, the Director of Finance will play the lead role in developing and managing the organization's fiscal functions. Second, a Senior Associate who will play an integral role in designing and executing projects within our career readiness portfolio and will also support work within our postsecondary transitions and postsecondary attainment portfolios as needed. Learn more and apply for the position [here](#).



Education Strategy Group (ESG) works with America's education, business, and civic leaders to expand economic opportunity and mobility by increasing educational attainment. We are driven by the conviction that a robust education system aligned with workforce demands leads to a stronger, more equitable society.

[Contact us](#) to learn more and work together