

POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS

THERE ARE MANY
HIGH-QUALITY OPPORTUNITIES
FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL
THAT CAN LEAD TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.

The best way to be set up for success in our shifting economy is to pursue education and training in a field or industry that is growing and pays family-sustaining wages. Education and training after high school can take many forms.

Apprenticeships



Apprenticeships are on-the-job learning of a skilled trade paired with postsecondary classroom learning and tend to be highly valued in the workforce. They are particularly prevalent for building trades (like electricians, plumbers, and carpenters) but also exist in manufacturing, healthcare, and financial services, and are increasing in importance in other fields.

Certifications



Certifications are issued by an organization with authority in a particular field — like a trade association. Though there is wide variation among different fields in what a certification means and represents, a particular type of certification can demonstrate desirable expertise or, in some cases, may be required for entry into a particular career — like an Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) certification for paramedics.

Certificates



Certificates are issued by colleges and universities in specific fields and require less time to complete than an associate degree. Certificates can be used to prove that students have acquired specific skills or expertise in fields like health care, business, marketing, mechanical repairs, and many more.

Two-Year Degrees



A two-year associate degree typically includes both general education and career preparation needed to begin achieving academic and professional success in a given field in less time than a bachelor's degree requires. Two-year degrees can prepare students for entry-level positions in fields like healthcare and can be used as building blocks toward the eventual completion of a bachelor's degree.

Four-Year Degrees



A four-year bachelor's degree is the most expensive and time consuming of these postsecondary options but is usually the strongest foundation for long-term economic success. Bachelor's degrees are available in a wide variety of fields and are required to obtain jobs in some of them.