



## Welcome to ICF *Education Connections*

The October 2016 issue of *Education Connections* considers ICF contributions to career pathways and career and technical education. We focus on two of our many evaluations of TAACCCT programs and ICF's role with a National Science Foundation funded study of engineering technology career pathways. Lastly, we report on our webinar series on new developments in career pathways policy and practice in several states.

ICF's expertise extends from early education to K-12 schooling, to postsecondary education and workforce development. The solutions we devise with our clients enhance their capacity to achieve the outcomes they seek. Visit our [website](#) for more information about ICF in education.

### ICF Manages TAACCCT External Studies

ICF has served as external evaluator for Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) programs—funded by the U.S. Department of Labor—in several states, including Florida, Maine, Maryland, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Consortium staff at Central Maine Community College (CMCC) are leading *Maine is IT!* at seven public community colleges to address gaps in the supply of skilled IT workers across the state. CMCC contracted with ICF to serve as the third-party evaluator and conduct a longitudinal study of implementation and outcome data and a comparison cohort study using a quasi-experimental design to compare students in *Maine is IT!* programs of study to students in business administration programs of study. *Maine is IT!* seeks to increase workers' employability by improving access to IT training opportunities in a range of industries (healthcare, banking, and government).



Also funded through TAACCCT, Heroes for Hire provides institutions of higher learning in West Virginia with resources to expand and improve career pathway programs that increase employability and employment of unemployed and underemployed adults, including veterans. Mountwest Community and Technical College is leading a consortium with two other community and technical colleges from the West Virginia Community and Technical College System to address workforce needs in economically impoverished regions of the state. ICF's approach to the Heroes for Hire evaluation is grounded in a collaborative evaluation approach, intended to increase the likelihood of building and sustaining a culture of high-quality data-driven decision-making. ICF is conducting a mixed-method evaluation using a quasi-experimental design with a non-random comparison group.

## ICF Evaluates PathTech Career Pathway Studies

ICF conducted the external evaluation of the Successful Academic and Employment Pathways in Advanced Technologies (PathTech) project, a four-year research study funded



by the National Science Foundation to examine the progression of students from high school into advanced technology programs, specifically engineering technology (ET), at community colleges and into the workforce. PathTech involved collaboration between two-year community and technical colleges, industry partners, and local high schools and led to exploration of unanticipated

avenues that can strengthen partnerships and pathways and ultimately inform practices in ET programs. ICF's external evaluation included both quantitative analysis and qualitative approaches and serving as a resource for technical and logistical issues. ICF is also serving as evaluation consultant to the PathTech Life research team on the development of its national survey to measure pathways, career goals, and school-work-life balance of individuals completing coursework, certification, and associate's degrees in advanced technology programs at community colleges in the U.S.

## Webinar Series Examines Career Pathways

ICF has sponsored, in partnership with Advance CTE, a series of recent webinars on career and technical education innovations by states. This past August, a webinar highlighted **Kentucky's Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky** youth pre-apprenticeship program—a partnership between the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education and the Kentucky Labor Cabinet—to provide secondary students with career pathway opportunities into registered apprenticeship programs. The webinar discussed registered apprenticeship and pipeline needs and issues from employer and student perspectives, as well as outcomes and lessons learned. Visit [this link](#) for more information.



A previous webinar examined how **Tennessee has reshaped work-based learning** to create a rigorous and relevant experience for all students that reinforces academic, technical, and social skills through collaborative activities with industry. This webinar explored how Tennessee developed and is implementing its revitalized work-based learning program statewide, complete with accountability metrics and professional learning communities to provide ongoing support to local practitioners. Details at [this link](#).

The inaugural webinar in the series explored how **West Virginia's Simulated Workplace**, poised for statewide implementation in 2016-2017, has reinvented career technical education by bringing the workplace inside the four walls of a classroom for a student-centered simulated experience. This webinar discussed the road to implementation—from concept to pilot to state enactment—as well as lessons learned along the way. Visit [this link](#)

for an interview with Kathy D'Antoni, West Virginia Associate Superintendent, Career and Technical Education. See [this link](#) for more information about the webinar.

## ICF Seeks Senior Evaluator



If you want to work on the leading issues of the day, if you want your work to reflect your passion in life, if you truly want to make the world a better place, then work at ICF International.

We seek a **Senior Evaluator** to provide technical leadership on designing and implementing rigorous research and evaluation studies on a wide range of education policies and programs for federal, state, local, and nonprofit clients. You will play an active role in business development and mentoring staff. Basic qualifications include a doctoral degree in education, psychology, sociology, public policy or related fields, 10 years of post-graduate experience in applied research, and excellent oral and written communication skills. Visit [this link](#) for more details.