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From Graduation Caps to Hard Hats: Ranken Technical College Students Learn Hands-On Workforce Skills While Building Stronger Communities

By Jeanne C. Marra

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Ranken Technical College's Carpentry & Building Construction Technology students are seated in a classroom learning the tools of the trade for building houses. The other three days of the week, rain or shine, they learn in their virtual lab—a house they are building two blocks away. They are pouring foundations, framing bedrooms and, eventually, laying ceramic tile in what will soon become a family's kitchen. By the time they graduate, Ranken students have a brick-and-mortar portfolio that showcases a brand-new single-family home, crafted from their newfound skills and guided by veteran expertise.

Fulfilling an Economic Need Through Middle-Skill Labor

Since 1907, the mission at Ranken Technical College in St. Louis has been to train skilled workers for the region by preparing students for careers in trade, technical and skilled-service occupations. With its roots in mechanical trades, today's Ranken, which offers bachelor's degrees, associate degrees and certificate programs, is equally known for its technical achievements and state-of-the-art technologies that keep students abreast of the latest marketplace needs. During this period of unstable economy and at a time when the value of traditional higher education is being questioned, Ranken claims its graduates are still in high demand, as evidenced by its 96 to 98 percent

job-placement rate within six months of graduation.

The reason for Ranken's impressive success? "We train people for the middle-skill levels," says John Wood, vice president for student success at the college. According to Wood, this middle-skill level was traditionally supported primarily by baby boomers, who are now retiring in great numbers. Ranken's educational approach helps fill the gaps resulting from such vacancies and keeps many technical jobs in the United States, Wood says. "Not only that, but these trades are traditionally recession-proof," he adds. According to a December 2012 article in *Harvard Business Review*, middle-skill jobs are expected

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TOP: Almost market-ready, this newly completed house sold even before it was listed, in May 2013. BOTTOM: Ranken's Carpentry & Building Construction Technology students receive hands-on expert training on all stages of homebuilding projects—from framing to finishing.

Creative Placemaking: Strategically Shaping the Character of a Community

By Jeremy Nowak

ArtPlace America is a collaboration of 13 national and regional foundations and six national banks whose purpose is to promote *creative placemaking*—defined as placing art and culture at the center of community and economic renewal.

There are great examples of creative placemaking throughout urban and rural America—in emerging cultural districts, in the use of performances and art installations to animate public spaces, and in the re-use of old infrastructure to promote creative enterprise and community-based art. At its best, creative placemaking facilitates social inclusion, connects disparate communities and contributes to the overall vibrancy of a place.

In historical terms, creative placemaking has emerged during the past 30 years at the intersection of four practices and perspectives: 1) an emphasis on creating quality public spaces; 2) local community and economic development efforts; 3) a better appreciation of the regional economic importance of art and culture; and 4) recognition of the competitive value of creativity, as expressed through the ameni-

ties we build and the human capital we enable.

From its inception, ArtPlace America was conceived as a partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Under the leadership of former NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman, creative placemaking became an important NEA theme. This was reflected in the “Our Town” grant-making program and in efforts to rally support for creative placemaking through other domestic programs, from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to the Department of Agriculture and many others. The organization continues to work with public agencies at the federal and local levels, advocating for a creative placemaking perspective.

In its first three years, ArtPlace America has built national momentum by:

- distributing \$42 million in grants in its first three rounds of grant-making;
- raising a \$12-million loan fund from financial institutions (managed by Nonprofit Finance Fund USA);
- launching a national research effort around neighborhood vibrancy and diversity;
- highlighting America’s 12 most creative communities, based on the vibrancy index;



Philadelphia's The Porch at 30th St. Station, now a welcoming plaza with performances and a café atmosphere | image courtesy of University City District

- initiating the first national creative placemaking summit (Miami, January 2013); and
- creating a policy dialogue in Washington, D.C., and many other localities around the use of public resources to support creative placemaking.

ArtPlace America exists to enable the multi-field integration already happening in American cities and towns, as well as to encourage or inspire new experiments in the field. We are funding a movement led by an extraordinary group of practitioners and visionary leaders. We function as the innovation channel for member foundations and banks, identifying projects that meet creative placemaking criteria and providing the flexible money they need to succeed.

At the root of creative placemaking is a belief that artistic and cultural practices should not be separated from many of the functions of everyday life, including how we fund much of our public infrastructure and

commercial life. So what does this look like on the ground?

The diversity of ArtPlace America projects is remarkable and the demand for its grant resources far outpaces what the organization can support. The grants made thus far (more than \$42 million) represent 134 separate grants to 124 organizations in more than 80 communities from a pool of over 3,200 applications over the three grant rounds.

At times, a creative placemaking project brings attention to future development possibilities. This was true in the case of the Washington, D.C., Art and Culture Temporum. The D.C. Temporum selected key vacant lots and underutilized spaces for a wide variety of curated, temporary art installations. This project brought attention and excitement to communities that require longer-term, more sustained renewal efforts.

In other instances, creative placemaking animates a public

space through design, public art and civic engagement, bringing to life places that seemed hidden from view or simply soulless. Philadelphia's "The Porch at 30th Street Station" is a terrific case in point. Before it became "The Porch," a welcoming plaza with performances and a café atmosphere, it was a nondescript entry point to one of the busiest train stations in the nation.

Or consider new efforts in Milwaukee, where three communities are teaming up to rebuild a former rail corridor. "Creational Trails" will use interactive art, light and sound pieces to create a sense of connectivity among communities that were geographically proximate but psychologically and socially disconnected.

ArtPlace America is funding several projects in the Eighth Federal Reserve District, including the following:

South on Main by The Oxford American — Little Rock, Ark.

The Oxford American has created a home for diverse live-arts programming and food that uses regional distinctiveness as its focus in Little Rock's burgeoning South Main Street (SoMa) district. The space, which opened in May 2013, includes a restaurant run by chef Matthew Bell that serves up refined Southern cuisine alongside nightly cultural programming, including the best of Southern literature, music, film, art and drama.

Memphis Music Magnet @ Soulsville USA by Community LIFT and Memphis Symphony Orchestra — Memphis, Tenn.

Working together, Community LIFT and the Memphis Symphony have collaborated to hold concerts in Soulsville, the home of legendary Stax Records, which has attracted new people to the historic community. It has also put the symphony on stage with a variety of different genres of music, including gospel choirs and the North Mississippi Allstars. The blending of genres and the diverse audiences are contributing to the renewal of Soulsville while also creating a new purpose for the orchestra.

Broad Avenue Water Tower Depot by Binghampton Development Corp. and Historic Broad Business Association — Memphis, Tenn.

Binghampton Development Corp. and Historic Broad Business Association will transform an active warehouse loading dock on historic Broad Avenue into an outdoor arts venue, convert a 140-foot water tower into an iconic public art beacon and activate The Water Tower Depot with eight weekends of community dance, followed by eight months of community-based programming.

Rebuild in North St. Louis by Rebuild Foundation — St. Louis, Mo.

Led by internationally renowned artist and creative placemaker Theaster

Gates, Rebuild Foundation will expand its revitalization work in the North St. Louis neighborhood of Hyde Park by transforming a vacant building and adjacent lot into an arts- and design-centric urban amenity. Activated by diverse programming and developed in partnership with the community, this project will include The Listening Room, which will share archives of black music with the neighborhood; a cultural food program; an artist-led forum on neighborhood public space; and an incubator for local craftsmen and artistic entrepreneurs.

Projects such as these fill a void in our national development vocabulary. One of the challenges of ArtPlace is to draw attention to this void in an affirmative way by supporting great projects. ArtPlace America's work can help us reframe how we plan, create and implement development through the body of work we support, and through our ability to highlight the ways aesthetic, civic and economic components come together to redefine place. In a nation that is re-thinking *how* and *whether* it invests in infrastructure—and that prides itself on innovation—creative placemaking is a powerful idea.

Jeremy Nowak is the interim director of ArtPlace America (www.artplaceamerica.org) in Chicago, Ill.



TOP: Legendary Stax Records in Soulsville USA | image courtesy of Memphis Music Magnet
MIDDLE: Rendering of the Broad Avenue Water Tower Depot in Memphis | image courtesy of Broad Avenue Arts District; created by Fuss & O'Neill
BOTTOM: Workers transform a derelict building in North St. Louis | image courtesy of Rebuild Foundation

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▶ "Transforming Communities Through Creative Placemaking"

Graduation Caps to Hard Hats

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to stand the test of time. In fact, some labor market experts estimate that as many as 25 million, or 47 percent, of all new job openings from 2010 to 2020 will fall into the middle-skills range.

James McNichols, who graduated from Ranken in 2004 and returned in 2009 as a faculty instructor in the carpentry department, says a key difference in the school's approach is its hands-on technical experience. This innovative approach provides complete job training "that meets all of the expecta-

tions employers would have for their employees," says McNichols. He describes several of the soft-skills features that comprise Ranken's grading system, such as attendance, appearance and work ethics—skills students don't always fully appreciate until they see how beneficial these traits are later on. "When students graduate and go out into the real world, they come back and tell us they appreciate these standards."

Building Neighbors, One House at a Time

While students and employers value the skills training Ranken provides, neighbors undoubtedly benefit from the 50-plus new single-family residences that have helped revitalize the North St. Louis city neighborhood that surrounds the school. With the establishment and support of the Ranken Community Development Corporation (RCDC) in 1994, students and faculty across numerous disciplines—from architecture, carpentry and plumbing to HVAC, electrical and finish work—use their skills to build new, affordable homes for low- and moderate-income residents that replace the vacant, deteriorating and abandoned homes common to the area. "Students do 100 percent of what their trade is," explains Wood.

Mindful of tying training to evolving workforce needs, Ranken's homebuilding program has changed over the years since its inception in the

'90s. Reflecting the needs of the day, four houses were built each year back then, when the construction industry was quickly building subdivisions, and the college highlighted framing work as a key job skill while partnering with other entities for different kinds of work. Today, with much of the need shifting to rehabbing and remodeling, the workforce demands a greater depth of finishing skills; as a result, students work on one project from start to finish, developing a fuller range of expertise, and typically build only one house per year. In addition, there is a trend toward green technology—today's homes meet

the returns speak for themselves. "This is not a profitable venture," Wood explains. "We will spend more than what we can sell for, especially in this economy." The motive for such an undertaking? "There's no better laboratory for our students," Wood says. Not only that, but the program is good for the neighboring community as well. "No one else is buying vacant property and redeveloping it," Wood adds.

Microenterprises Help Students Earn While They Learn

Further marrying its workforce development approach to regional and student employment needs, Ranken established

Ranken says graduates are still in high demand, as evidenced by its 96 to 98 percent job-placement rate within six months of graduation.

2013 energy standards, and students are learning advanced techniques that were not even available a decade ago.

Initial funding for the homes comes primarily through private construction loans, although the school has sought subsidies and grants and eagerly seeks partnerships to defray costs. "We are always looking for partners to work with," says Wood. "If a Lowe's or Home Depot came along and asked us what we would need, I could literally hand them a list."

Although the educational approach is an investment,

a microenterprise program in which students can earn both academic credit and an income through employment with microbusinesses located on campus. Two participating companies include bioMerieux, which hires students to assemble and test the electrical and mechanical components of high-tech lab equipment, and Jim Moran & Associates (JM&A Group), which pays students to help support the call center for its national automotive extended warranty service. Other companies are partnering with Ranken for manufacturing operations,



Ranken students appreciate working at one of several microenterprise businesses on campus, which offer on-site employment and academic credit.

leading the college to renovate existing space to accommodate growing opportunities.

The microenterprise program is an especially big hit with students, who appreciate the opportunity to gain practical skills and earn money without having to leave campus. “We know students always need money,” says Wood. “The difficult part is their travel to jobs and cost of transportation. This program allows them to have a part-time job that is close to their work and school.”

Employers, and ultimately their communities, benefit as well, by hiring Ranken’s efficient, skilled workforce for labor that not only meets their business needs but retains jobs that might have otherwise shifted overseas.

For more information on Ranken Technical College in St. Louis, see www.ranken.edu.

Jeanne C. Marra is a senior community development specialist at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

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See a photo gallery from Ranken Technical College online.

Yearning to Breathe Free: Empowering Immigrants in Louisville

By *Edgardo Mansilla*

Americana Community Center (ACC) is a nonprofit organization in Louisville, Ky. Founded in 1990 in response to the city’s growing foreign-born population, the organization’s programs have grown to serve more than 5,000 individuals each year, representing those born in the U.S. and in 92 other countries. Multifaceted programs are offered, creating an inclusive environment that promotes educational growth and community involvement.

Adults come to ACC to improve their English, prepare to take the GED exam, receive free income tax assistance, tend a plot in the community garden or even study to become a U.S. citizen. Children have a wide variety of options as well. Out-of-school programs offer academic assistance, creative arts and recreation programs. Community events and an annual festival help celebrate the diversity of Louisville’s neighborhoods.

ACC’s Family Education Program provides comprehensive services to refugee and immigrant families to support their successful integration. This program educates and informs parents, supporting them in achieving academic and life goals, while simulta-

neously focusing on school preparedness for their children. It is based on a nationally recognized family literacy model, tailored to meet the needs of a multicultural population. The program addresses a phenomenon that is common in immigrant families—the children pick up the language and culture much faster than the parents, which can disrupt the traditional family structure. Using ACC’s approach, the whole family learns together, restoring the parents’ role as primary educators. Participants have the opportunity to work with a family coach who assists the parents (“family leaders”) in creating goals, connecting to community resources and overcoming barriers to economic self-sufficiency.

In ACC’s program, a goal can be anything that a family leader views as central to the success and stability of their family. Parents have set goals for employment, homeownership, completing a GED or learning English. Some parents may find themselves in a crisis situation due to financial or domestic instability, but coaching is structured to help parents re-establish stability through access to community resources, support and advocacy. Participants in this program have achieved

significant goals, including homeownership, saving for their children’s future education and advancing out of the highest English as a Second Language (ESL) class to begin work on their GED.

The coaching relationship is built through mutual trust and respect. The family coach does not create a plan for what a family should do, but asks parents what they want for the future of their family and what they need in order to get there. Coaching is based on the fundamental principle that every individual is endowed with the capacity to make the best decisions for themselves and their families. Coaches help to provide the education and access necessary for families to enact their plan for future success and to remove

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ACC’s Youth Programs create lifelong friendships and build self-confidence.





Edgardo Mansilla is a native of Buenos Aires, Argentina. He first came to Louisville, Ky., in 1990 on a scholarship to study social work.

He is a social worker, executive director of the Americana Community Center (ACC) and part-time professor at the University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work and at Bellarmine University. Mansilla works extensively in south Louisville; however, his biggest challenge and goal in the city is to have an international voice in meetings where the decision-making process is done. He holds a master's degree in social work from the Carver School of Church Social Work as well as a master's in theology. He is a graduate of Focus Louisville, Leadership of Louisville and Neighborhood Leadership; he was also a Bingham Fellow. Mansilla has received numerous awards for his work and serves on many boards and commissions. In October 2012 he was inducted into the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame. He is a member of the Community Development Advisory Council (CDAC) for the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

CDAC members are experts in community and economic development and financial education. They complement the information developed through outreach by the District's Community Development staff and suggest ways that the Bank might support local efforts. A list of current members is available at www.stlouisfed.org/community_development.

Empowering Immigrants

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barriers to reaching their goals. When a parent is given knowledge and access, they are no longer put in a position where they must rely on others for their success; instead they are responsible for their own achievements. Through this process, they are empowered to meet their goals and share their success with others. Family Coaching creates a coalition of community leaders from various ethnic backgrounds who share the knowledge and resources gained from Family Education throughout their communities, extending the reach of ACC's programs. Future plans include securing funding for a second full-time family coach to work with the families of Youth Program participants as well.

Success stories are being written each and every day at ACC. A youth participant who is struggling with behavioral issues at school and home finds his place as part of the ACC soccer team, building self-confidence and positive behavior skills with the support of his coach and teammates. Three refugee families from Burma become first-time homebuyers through the Family Coaching Program and spread the knowledge they gained throughout their community. A partnership recently formed with Spalding University provides mental health services to ACC participants at no cost, which is especially critical for building family

resilience and coping skills as many clients have experienced trauma in their country of origin or refugee camp.

A former Youth Program participant recently wrote a thank you letter to ACC. "When I look at where I am today and when I'm able to reflect on the kind of life it has been, I can't help but recognize the role that the Community Center has played in it," she wrote. "I was 11 years old when the Center became a part of my life; I grew up with it and, in many ways, through it. Americana is where I opened my first e-mail address. It's where I spent countless hours working on homework, attending health classes, speaker series and art classes. I was introduced to various cultures and, most of all, to other kids I could relate to and families much like my own. Americana is where I formed some of the greatest friendships of my life and I couldn't imagine my life without these same relationships.

"My first job was also with the Community Center as a counselor at their annual summer camp. When it came time to start thinking about college, I began the search with Americana by going on various college visits. Today, I've recently finished my master's degree and have joined the working world. I thank the Center for the consistently positive role it played in my life. Thank you for doing what you can for a community that needed it then and needs it now."



A mother and her daughter work side by side in ACC's community garden.

ACC fills a unique niche in the community, serving the newest residents alongside those who have called Louisville home for years. The programs offered give participants the tools they need for success so they can achieve their full potential and contribute positively to the community. Partnerships are utilized in order to maximize the service provided and stretch program dollars further. For instance, Jefferson County Public Schools provides the instructors and resources for ACC's adult education classes. The organization relies on the support of grants and private donations to fund the rest of its work.

To learn more about ACC, how to donate or to become involved through volunteering, please visit www.americanacc.org or find them on Facebook or Twitter.

Saving Up for College, Gearing Up for Success: A Holistic Strategy for Increasing Access to Higher Education

By Johanna Gruenewald

As the cost of college attendance continues to rise and the availability of grants and scholarships simultaneously dwindles, higher education has become less accessible to those who are unable to shoulder the expense. (See Figure 1.) Child development accounts (CDAs), however, represent a promising tool for moderating such financial barriers.

Similar to individual development accounts, CDAs are savings accounts specifically designated for postsecondary education. A substantial body of research supports the effectiveness of CDAs in facilitating both college enrollment and

completion, with particularly significant implications for low-income students.¹ Although these accounts are not new, emerging collaboration between CDA initiatives and college access programming offers an exciting opportunity to provide students with the social and financial resources necessary to make the prospect of higher education a reality.

Traditional Models

Traditionally, CDAs have been distributed through three primary channels. First, states offer 529 college savings plans, which allow resident families to set aside funds for postsecondary education. While these accounts have been instrumental in providing households

with tax-advantaged savings opportunities, they remain largely underutilized by low-income families.

The second avenue through which CDAs have been administered is community-based organizations, many of which have attempted to make the accounts more inclusive by using federal grant dollars to offer matching incentives to income-eligible individuals. Though many such initiatives have demonstrated success, their voluntary nature has proven to limit widespread participation.

The third and most recently developed delivery method is through cities. In 2010, the San Francisco Office of Financial Empowerment devised a strategy to circumvent the opt-in problem associated with voluntary programs by administering CDAs to all kindergartners in the public school system.² This effort is too new to warrant conclusions regarding its effectiveness.

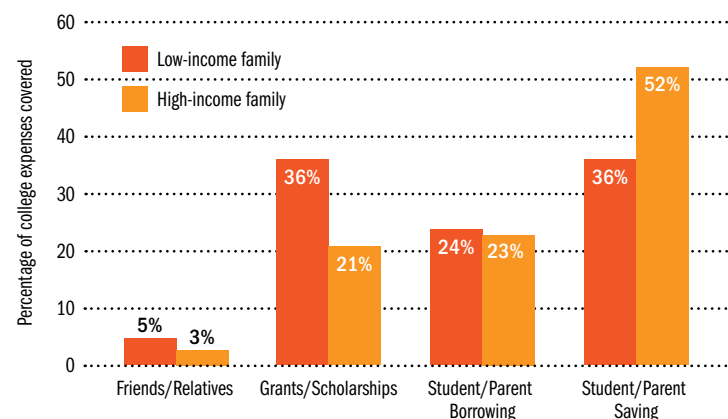
An Innovative Approach

Growing enthusiasm for CDA programs in the past several years has sparked continued innovation in service-delivery methods. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) announced an invita-

tional priority to support the merger of CDAs into Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), a federal college access program.³ Intended to provide early intervention services, GEAR UP offers grants to states and organizational partnerships for the purpose of establishing local projects targeted at low-income middle and high school students. The mission of GEAR UP is to increase rates of high school graduation as well as college preparedness, participation and completion through support services such as mentoring, tutoring, academic and financial counseling, and application assistance. The recent inclusion of savings accounts was primarily in response to research at the University of Kansas and at Washington University in St. Louis that links CDAs to improved educational outcomes.

At the end of the 2011 granting cycle, there were 66 new GEAR UP grantees, 42 of which proposed to offer savings accounts to project participants. Due to the great interest demonstrated by applicants, the DOE subsequently announced plans to conduct a national research demonstration. Washington University's Center for Social Development, in collaboration with global research firm Abt Associates, will lead the effort to determine the effects of incorporating

FIGURE 1 | Sources of Funding by Income Level



SOURCE: <https://www.salliemae.com/assets/Core/how-America-pays/HowAmericaPays2012.pdf>

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Innovative State Partnerships Influence the Creation of More-Efficient Certificate Programs

By Garrett Jackson

Technology-driven businesses in the 21st century are being met with a growing skills gap at the middle and top of the labor market. Until recently, response to this economic threat has been mixed, with many workforce boards, businesses and educational institutions working in a vacuum to address this concern. However, viable solutions are now being realized in the form of

More and more educators ... are re-evaluating the curriculum requirements for certificate programs to accommodate an ever-evolving global marketplace.

state-level partnerships that maximize the resources of each organization, streamlining certificate programs that prepare students for today's jobs.

Preparing Workers for 21st-Century Jobs: Retooling Curriculum

More and more educators at institutions that teach adult and nontraditional students are re-evaluating the curriculum requirements for certificate programs to accommodate an ever-evolving global market-

place. Both entry-level and experienced workers, who are looking to improve their marketability and resiliency in the economy, are turning to contextualized basic education, online learning and competency-based education.¹ These programs are preparing students with skills that "require the application of judgment... such as analytical skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills and the like," according to Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta President

and CEO Dennis P. Lockhart. These certificate programs often take less time to complete and focus more precisely on subject matter that is important to employers, thus preparing workers quickly and more efficiently for 21st-century jobs. Some innovative state partnerships are leading the charge in these initiatives.

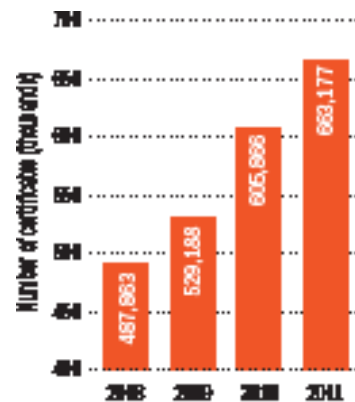
At one time, hiring managers could assume that a student's course completion reflected a mastery of the course material (e.g., a certificate in account-

ing qualifies someone to do accounting work, etc.). Increasingly, employers are no longer making that assumption and are helping to retool certificate programs in partnership with educational institutions, workforce boards and other organizations. These efforts specify certificate curriculum and program duration, and broaden the use of student testing, which might create a new norm in the workforce development pipeline for how adult basic education (ABE) students secure good-paying jobs. While these new programs buck the conventional theory that students are prepared when they achieve the institutionally required credit hours, these efforts could create a win-win for employers and potential employees.

Flexible State ABE Programs Address Completion and Skill Attainment

The National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) reported in 2012 that the number of two-year sub-baccalaureate certificates awarded at both public and private Title IV institutions totaled 663,177 persons in the 2010-2011 academic year—an increase of 9.4 percent from the 2009-2010 academic year. (See

FIGURE 1 | Total Sub-baccalaureate Certificates Awarded 2008-2011



SOURCE: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Fall 2011, Completions Component (Preliminary Data)

Figure 1.)² The trend shows healthy growth in the number of certificates awarded, but issues still remain. Half of the students entering two-year colleges are placed in remedial courses, 30 percent do not bother showing up and less than 10 percent actually graduate in less than three years.³

Several states responded to this trend by using a new model of embedding ABE material within technical-education classes taught at the postsecondary level for postsecondary credit. The new model increases the relevancy of classes and completion of

work, decreasing the time it takes an ABE student to receive a certificate. This increases the worker's marketability and resiliency in the labor market and begins to address the issue of ongoing worker skill attainment, which is required for businesses to stay competitive.

The following are three examples of states that are challenging traditional education systems to streamline certificate programs.

I-BEST Program—Washington

In Washington, a study by the Community College Research Center found that students who enrolled in an Integrated Basic Skills and Training (I-BEST) program were more likely to earn a certificate (by 7.5 percent) or gain college credit (by nearly 10 percent) when compared to students not enrolled in the program.⁴ Today seven states,

A student at New Horizons Career and Technical Education Center—a Virginia Peninsula Career Pathways initiative partner—prepares to plasma-cut a piece of steel in his welding class.



including Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and North Carolina, have joined the Accelerating Opportunity Initiative, a cross-state effort designed to build on Washington's success and expand workers' access to this brand of ABE coursework.

Manufacturing Sector Strategy—Virginia

The Virginia Peninsula Career Pathways initiative is meeting manufacturers' workforce needs by engaging 14 major employers in a consortium, along with the local workforce investment board, the community college, six school districts and other partners.⁵ Through a grant awarded to the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education, the consortium conducts research and development while implementing career pathways in manufacturing that are specifically tailored to 11,000 advanced-manufacturing and green-technologies jobs that are coming available in the next five years. This influenced the educational requirements for these jobs after the consortium completed an 18-month review of skills needs by the manufacturing partners. Once those skills were assessed, a web site was developed to match education with the skill sets, so people can see what training they need to prepare for the emerging market.

Job-Matching Portal—Oklahoma

Oklahoma recently launched a new job-matching portal that uses real-time labor market information to connect job seekers with open positions posted on more than 16,000 web sites. The software that powers the site and gauges hiring demand is also incorporated into the state's new career planning web site, which shows the education credentials and other requirements necessary for entry into 32 jobs within 14 different career tracks in the state, from entry to advanced levels.

State workforce development agencies should ensure that certificate programs offered by colleges and training facilities are preparing students for 21st-century workforce partnerships like these. Identifying emerging industries—and collaborating with all stakeholders across this sector—is key to developing programs that work. This approach ultimately helps students acquire postsecondary certificates that lead to jobs.

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A native of Mitchellville, Md., Garrett Jackson recently completed a six-month internship with the National Governors Association, researching state workforce develop-

ment, economic development and human services trends for state policy advisers. In the summer of 2012 he worked at the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System in the Division of Consumer and Community Affairs, studying the Independent Foreclosure Review and serving as a contributor to the signature *Policy Scan* info-database. Jackson holds a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University and a master's in public policy from The George Washington University Trachtenberg School of Public Policy, studying community development and urban policy.

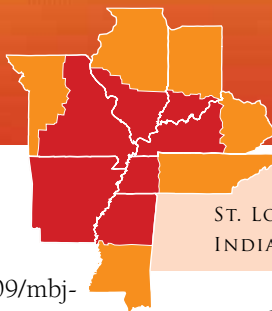
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SPANNING



THE REGION

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Martha Perine Beard Named a Super Woman in Business



Being a successful regional executive for the St. Louis Fed is an impressive accomplishment and title in itself, but now Martha Perine Beard has another title to add, courtesy of the *Memphis*

Business Journal: Super Woman. The newspaper recently announced its second class of “Super Women in Business,” and Perine Beard is one of the honorees.

Recognizing “25 of the most accomplished and influential women in the Memphis area business community,” the class includes executives from several companies and organizations. The newspaper described the honorees as not only successful professionals but also “community activists who spend personal time to make Memphis the best it can be” and congratulated them on being “great role models for younger female executives.”

“It really is an honor to be included in this list with so many other accomplished women,” said Perine Beard. “It’s also recognition of the Fed’s prominence in the Memphis business community.”

For a full list of the 2013 honorees, visit [http://www.](http://www.bizjournals.com/memphis/news/2013/07/09/mbj-names-2013-super-women-in-business.html)

[bizjournals.com/memphis/news/2013/07/09/mbj-names-2013-super-women-in-business.html](http://www.bizjournals.com/memphis/news/2013/07/09/mbj-names-2013-super-women-in-business.html).

Maria Hampton Discusses Financial Literacy

In a recent op-ed published in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, the St. Louis Fed’s Louisville Regional Executive Maria Hampton discussed the need for Kentucky and Indiana schools to place a greater emphasis on financial literacy.

“The local conversation about education has focused on the need for increasing enrollment in Kentucky colleges and universities and on making it easier for all to attend college and earn a degree,” Hampton wrote. “While those objectives will be instrumental in the success of future generations, they don’t address the issue that many of our children leave high school and college without the ability to manage their money.”

“The St. Louis Fed has a staff of economic education specialists that are working closely with teachers across our seven-state district—including many here in the greater Louisville region—to provide professional development and lesson plans on financial and economic education,” Hampton noted. “Local teachers serve on our educa-

tor advisory boards to help us identify personal-finance needs in their classrooms, to review and pilot our curriculum, and to organize professional development programs for local schools and school districts.”

Hampton concluded, “We must do more to ensure that students leaving Kentucky high schools are prepared with the personal finance education

necessary for financial success in whatever career path they pursue. Together we must teach our children the skills they need for their financial future.”



HAVE YOU HEARD

Elizabeth Duke Resigns from Federal Reserve Board of Governors

Federal Reserve Gov. Elizabeth Duke will resign from the Board of Governors on or around Aug. 31. She has not yet announced future plans.

“The five years since I joined the Board in August 2008 brought some of the most challenging conditions ever encountered by the Federal Reserve,” Duke said. “I believe history will judge that the Federal Reserve, under the resolute leadership of Chairman [Ben] Bernanke, met every test in a thoughtful, innovative and effective way. Such a response would not have been possible without the unique mix of intellect, expertise, creativity and tireless dedication to service that the people who make up the Federal Reserve System bring to work every day. I am proud to have contributed to their efforts.”

In a press release, Bernanke praised Duke for her service to the Board. “Betsy has made invaluable contributions to the Federal Reserve and to the country during her five years at the Board,” Bernanke said. “She brought fresh ideas grounded in her deep knowledge of the banking industry and the real-world dynamic between borrowers and lenders. I wish her the best in her future endeavors.”

During her time on the Board, Duke chaired both the Committee on Consumer and Community Affairs and the Subcommittee on Supervision and Regulation of Community and Small Regional Banking Organizations. Before joining the Board, she served as senior executive vice president and chief operating officer of TowneBank, a Virginia-based community bank.

Saving Up for College

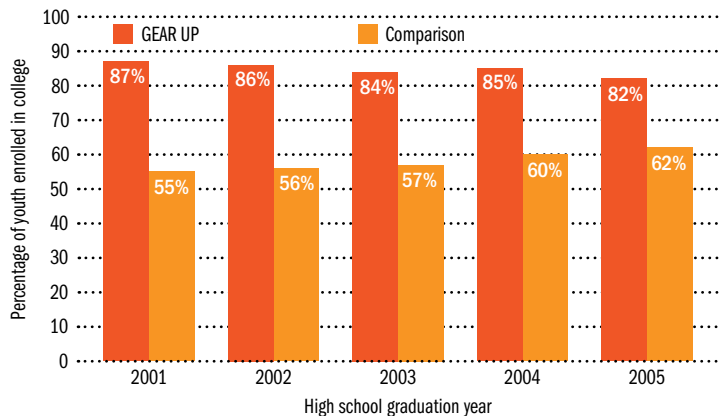
continued from Page 7

savings opportunities into traditional GEAR UP activities. Results of the study will likely impact future policy initiatives related to both higher education and savings programs.

The six-year evaluation, which will begin in 2014, will include 20,000 students at 200 high schools in 10 different states.⁴ Participants will be randomly assigned to receive either regular GEAR UP services or regular services plus the additional savings component. Those in the savings group will receive an account with a \$200 seed deposit and will have the opportunity to earn a dollar-for-dollar match of \$10 per month for four years thereafter.⁵ By the end of the program, students could save more than \$1,000, all of which would be used to cover educational expenses upon college enrollment. Students will also be able to take advantage of GEAR UP's financial counseling services to obtain additional scholarships.

Though past CDA programs have paired savings accounts with general financial education, the GEAR UP model represents the first large-scale, federally endorsed partnership between college access and matched-savings initiatives. Evidence suggests that both college access programs and CDAs have independently beneficial effects on college enrollment and completion

FIGURE 2 | Percent of Youth Enrolled in College Within 5 Years of Graduating High School



SOURCE: <http://www.gearup.wa.gov/files/Making%20the%20Dream%20a%20Reality%202012.pdf>

rates (see Figure 2), especially among low-income youth. It remains very promising, then, that the combination of the two will produce favorable results.

While college readiness services are indeed critical in preparing students for the application process, such efforts are fruitless if families do not have the financial means to fund higher education. Likewise, financial resources without sufficient academic and social supports may not be adequate in promoting college attendance. The collaboration between GEAR UP and CDAs, therefore, represents an important advancement in holistic service provision that will allow some of America's most disadvantaged youth to reap the many benefits of higher education.

Johanna Gruenewald is a graduate student in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis and a practicum student in the Community Development Office of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Elliot, W. (2012). "Are All Types of Financial Aid Created Equal?" *Bridges*, 1-3. Retrieved from <http://www.stlouisfed.org/publications/br/articles/?id=2368>.
- 2 Kindergarten to College. Retrieved from <http://sfofe.org/programs/k-to-c>.
- 3 GEAR UP. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>.
- 4 "Washington University Researchers to Help DOE Study College Savings Accounts." Retrieved from <http://www.newswise.com/articles/washington-university-researchers-to-help-doe-study-college-savings-accounts>.
- 5 "Education Department Releases Proposal to Help Thousands of Disadvantaged Students Access College Through Savings Accounts." Retrieved from <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/education-department-releases-proposal-help-thousands-disadvantaged-students-acc>.

BRIDGES

Bridges is a publication of the Community Development Office of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. It is intended to inform bankers, community development organizations, representatives of state and local government agencies and others in the Eighth District about current issues and initiatives in community and economic development. The Eighth District includes the state of Arkansas and parts of Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.

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CALENDAR

AUGUST

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This Is Where We Live: Tennessee Affordable Housing Coalition, West Tennessee Regional Meeting—Memphis, Tenn.

Sponsors: Multiple
www.stlouisfed.org/community_development/events/?id=487

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Exploring Innovation in Community Development Audioconference—CRA: Building Culture That Yields Credit—Audioconference

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
www.stlouisfed.org/bsr/EI_CDAudioConference

SEPTEMBER

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Tennessee Statewide Microenterprise Meeting—Nashville, Tenn.

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Banks of St. Louis and Atlanta
Contact: Kathy Moore Cowan at Kathy.M.Cowan@stls.frb.org

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Saving Your Small Town: Homegrown Community and Economic Development—Oxford, Miss.

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
www.stlouisfed.org/community_development/events/?id=489

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A Capital Idea: Connecting Funding Partnerships in Kentucky—Lexington, Ky.

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Banks of St. Louis and Cleveland
Contact: Faith Weekly at Faith.E.Weekly@stls.frb.org

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Saving Your Small Town: Homegrown Community and Economic Development—Jackson, Tenn.

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
www.stlouisfed.org/community_development/events/?id=495

16–17

Women in Business Expo 2013—Louisville, Ky.

Sponsors: Multiple
www.cvcky.org/womensbusinesscenter.html

19–20

2013 Policy Summit on Housing, Human Capital, and Inequality—Cleveland, Ohio

Sponsors: Federal Reserve Banks of Cleveland and Philadelphia
www.clevelandfed.org/community_development/events/ps2013/index.cfm

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Children's Savings Accounts—Louisville, Ky.

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
Contact: Lisa Locke at Lisa.Locke@stls.frb.org

OCTOBER

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Exploring Innovation in Community Development Audioconference—Rural Development—Audioconference

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
Contact: Matt Ashby at Matthew.W.Ashby@stls.frb.org

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Saving Your Small Town: Homegrown Community and Economic Development—Sikeston, Mo.

Sponsor: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
Contact: Kathy Moore Cowan at Kathy.M.Cowan@stls.frb.org

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www.stlouisfed.org/publications/br

In addition to the print version, each issue of *Bridges* offers information that is exclusively online. Online content for the summer issue includes:

- ▶ **Exploring Innovation Week 2013: Community Development in Times of Austerity**
By Lisa Locke
- ▶ **Eight from the Eighth Audio Podcast: Memphis' Start Co. (formerly LaunchYourCity), Eric Matthews**
- ▶ **From Graduation Caps to Hard Hats: A Photo Gallery from Ranken Technical College**
- ▶ **Calendar**
Expanded list of community development events



BRIDGES | SUMMER 2013

<https://www.stlouisfed.org/publications/bridges/summer-2013/exploring-innovation-week-2013-community-development-in-times-of-austerity>

Exploring Innovation Week 2013: Community Development in Times of Austerity

Lisa J. Locke

The Great Recession officially ended in June 2009, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research. However, many families are still feeling its economic impact, which has been far-reaching throughout the country but especially in low- and moderate-income (LMI) families and neighborhoods. During this time of austerity in community development, many organizations have faced funding cuts and limited resources, but demand for services has continued to rise, forcing organizations to create innovative strategies to meet the growing need.

In this current climate of funding cuts, what is ahead for our communities? How can we continue to provide community development services during these times of austerity? What are some best practices in leveraging resources?

The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis' Exploring Innovation Week 2013 featured national experts who provided insight into strategies to handle the many challenges faced by community development organizations.

Partners for the Common Good

Kristin Faust is the director of lending and network services at Partners for the Common Good (PCG), where her primary focus is successfully accessing and deploying capital in underserved markets for both financial and social returns. Faust defines a healthy community as one that is vibrant and diverse both racially and economically. She has tried to help create healthy, vibrant communities throughout her career.

As the first speaker of the day, Faust jump-started the conversation by describing four themes of innovation and sharing several examples of exciting and innovative strategies. She pointed out that innovation revolves around scale, technology, green sustainability and breaking down silos. One example of innovation is crowd funding, which allows individuals to make a loan anywhere in the country with a click of a button while sitting at a computer. Using this strategy, donations are pooled together to support the efforts of individuals or organizations. Crowd funding can support a variety of initiatives, including funding companies, nonprofit organization events and civic projects.

Other examples of innovation include impact investing, the influx of international development strategies in local community development efforts, and community development financial institutions (CDFIs). Faust believes CDFIs are one of the top innovative strategies available today. These organizations allow a space for creating, testing and producing ideas to take out into the marketplace (e.g., New Markets Tax Credits). CDFIs measure not only the financial consequences of any given strategy, but also the social impact on the community, which is a critical factor for community development initiatives.

For a video of the presentation given by Kristin Faust, [click here](#). For more information about Partners for the Common Good, visit www.pcgloanfund.org.

PlaceMakers

Ben Brown is a principal/storyteller with PlaceMakers, an organization that addresses the full scope of placemaking, from planning and design to community engagement and implementation. Since 2005, Brown has concentrated his housing work on cottage neighborhood solutions in the Gulf hurricane zones. He believes we are currently at a dramatic stage in the community development story due to a combination of the Great Recession and the changing market demand for housing.

From 1950 to 2000, there was a suburban movement, with residents spreading out. There was an increase in population, but a decrease in density. Today's housing market is feeling a double impact from the retirement of baby boomers and the coming of age of millennials. Now more than ever, individuals are remaining single and having fewer children, increasing the need for a different experience than the traditional suburban lifestyle. Boomers and millennials want to live in neighborhoods of mixed housing prices, surrounded by locally owned businesses, sidewalks, transit systems and parks, attractive to both aging and young professionals. Finding this type of healthy and sustainable neighborhood has proven to be a challenge in many cities and towns.

For a video of the presentation given by Ben Brown, [click here](#). For more information about PlaceMakers, visit www.placemakers.com; to read Ben Brown's blog, go to www.placemakers.com/tag/ben-brown.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Indianapolis

Bill Taft is the executive director of LISC Indianapolis, which is committed to taking a holistic approach in transforming distressed neighborhoods into healthy communities. LISC community development investments have included affordable housing, small business, schools, commercial revitalization and green spaces. LISC serves as an intermediary between community-based organizations, local and state governments, financial institutions and other organizations focused on community development.

When the organization begins work in a community, there are a few key principles in play:

1. Neighborhood residents must be fully engaged in the planning process, setting priorities and goals. Once these have been identified, they can start to focus on the resources needed to align with the goals.
2. The neighborhood should not focus on the negative, but on the assets of the community. Highlight and enhance what is unique.
3. Identify the infrastructure needs of the community. There has been a movement in community development away from focusing on affordable housing as a means of revitalization to a comprehensive plan that takes a holistic approach. Creating a comprehensive plan takes more collaboration but is a much more powerful strategy.

For a video of the presentation given by Bill Taft, [click here](#). For more information about LISC Indianapolis, visit www.liscindianapolis.org.

The Democracy Collaborative

Ted Howard is co-founder and executive director of The Democracy Collaborative at the University of Maryland, a national leader in community wealth-building strategies and policy development. He discussed

two great challenges facing community development today — wealth inequality and the growing level of poverty.

At The Democracy Collaborative, community wealth-building is an innovative method used to meet these growing challenges. One alternative is broad ownership over capital, a concept based on creating more business owners, who are a vital part of economic development. Another strategy centers on anchor institutions — those organizations that are not leaving the community, including universities and hospitals. These institutions have sizable purchasing power and can drive money locally. Howard also spoke about another wealth-building strategy — employee ownership/cooperatives, owned and controlled by the members. Today there are more than 11,000 cooperatives in the United States.

For a video of the presentation given by Ted Howard, [click here](#). For more information about The Democracy Collaborative, visit democracycollaborative.org.

Among the key takeaways from Exploring Innovation Week 2013, community development leaders were encouraged to:

- Seek partnerships – be willing to collaborate.
- Be vulnerable – be willing to try, even knowing that you may fail.
- Take a holistic approach – be comprehensive and consider quality of life plans.
- Plant, grow, share and reinvest in ourselves and others.
- Think big!

Links to presentations and summaries from the St. Louis Fed's Exploring Innovation Week 2013 can be found [here](#).

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