For Immediate Release

Washington Joins National Effort to Help Consumers Compare Cost and Value of Education and Training

New partnership with Credential Engine to enhance transparency of credentials for students, families, and jobseekers

June 27, 2019 (OLYMPIA, WA) – The state of Washington announced today a new major initiative with Credential Engine that will make information about education and training programs across the state more transparent to consumers and employers. Through the partnership, Washington's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board will publish data, including education and career outcomes, for thousands of apprenticeships, certificates, degrees, and other credentials to the national Credential Registry.

"Credentials are important to the worker and valuable to the employer," Gov. Jay Inslee said. "The work of Credential Engine will help Washington state move forward with our innovative Career Connected Learning initiative that is aimed at helping significantly more students pursue good-paying jobs after high school through career-ready education such as registered apprenticeships and technical training programs."

Washington will become the 10th state to publish information about its education and training programs to the Credential Registry, a cloud-based library that makes information on the value of credentials more transparent and accessible to students, consumers, and employers. Credential Engine is a non-profit that develops and maintains the technology infrastructure that enables this clear and connected credential marketplace.

"There are a growing number of short-term training programs recognized by industry that can lead to family-wage careers and upward mobility. But students and job-seekers often lack information on the career and earnings potential they can expect from credentials," said Eleni Papadakis, the Workforce Board's Executive Director. "By partnering with Credential Engine, our state will be able to share the market value of thousands of education credentials and provide a 'consumer report' on employment outcomes and earnings. This new infrastructure and common language will enable students, jobseekers, and others to make well-informed decisions about their future."

The state plans to merge data from Career Bridge, a free, public-facing website featuring over 6,500 Washington education and training programs. The site recorded 7 million page views in 2018 alone. Now in its 10th year, the site was launched by the Workforce Board in 2009 as a tool for middle and high school students exploring career and education options as well as adult workers and unemployed Washingtonians looking for career-focused education and training. The Workforce Board is developing a tool to translate the information from the Career Bridge site into CTDL, a set of common terminology created by Credential Engine that allows providers and their audiences to describe, understand, and compare different credentials.

The partnership was made possible through a $50,000 grant from Credential Engine to the Workforce Board. Using the funding, the Workforce Board will encourage state education and training providers to utilize the integration to push information directly to the Registry, with the goal of publishing as many as 3,800 credentials.

"Washington state has long been a leader in understanding and reporting on the value of credentials offered in their state," said Scott Cheney, Executive Director of Credential Engine. "We are thrilled that they also understand the value of utilizing a common language, ensuring that essential information about these credentials is fully transparent, searchable and comparable, to all other credentials on the open web for the benefit of all students, workers, veterans, employers, and educators anywhere in the world."

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Credential Engine is a non-profit whose mission is to create credential transparency, reveal the credential marketplace, increase credential literacy, and empower everyone to make more informed decisions about credentials and their value. Credential Engine receives support from Lumina Foundation, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Walmart, Northrop Grumman Foundation, ECMC Foundation, and Microsoft.

Credential Engine Contact: Carrie Samson csamson@credentialengine.org

The Workforce Board is a state agency that monitors and evaluates Washington state's key workforce programs and also provides leadership on policies that help all residents get the education and training they need to obtain living-wage jobs.

Workforce Board Contact: Marina Parr marina.parr@wtb.wa.gov