Credential Engine™

For Immediate Release

National count reveals maze of nearly one million credentials offered by US education, training providers

Annual report urges greater transparency into quality, outcomes and skills of credentials amid tense unemployment and economic crisis

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 10, 2020) -- National nonprofit Credential Engine today released the latest results of the largest and most comprehensive count of secondary and postsecondary credentials in the United States. The report, "Counting U.S. Postsecondary and Secondary Credentials," offers the most accurate estimate of credentials across 16 categories—including both traditional degrees, certificates, certifications, licenses and apprenticeships as well as non-traditional offerings such as badges.

The report estimates that there are 967,734 unique credentials in the United States, with almost half of those provided by non-academic organizations. The report calls for stakeholders to use these data and work towards "widespread adoption of a standard approach for describing, comparing and evaluating credentials and competencies". Close to half of all states have invested in credential transparency to address key workforce gaps amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and to meet larger state workforce and economic goals in general.

"Employers and workers are scrambling after the economy faced unexpected and painful roadblocks amid a global pandemic," says Scott Cheney, CEO of Credential Engine. "They shouldn't have to guess which skills and credentials meet their needs—particularly with the proliferation of new options in this new normal. Painting a clear picture of the credential landscape is a critical first step in helping illuminate effective pathways back to economic security." The report calls for this information to be made transparent as quickly as possible and put into the hands of workers, business leaders, and policymakers right now.

These data—along with a reported [$1.921 trillion yearly expenditures](#) in education and training in the U.S. from educational institutions, employers, federal grant programs, states, and the military—underscore the need for a greater understanding of what these credentials mean: the skills they represent, their associated costs, the job and earnings outcomes they lead to, where they can be attained, and so on.

The report's latest estimate was once again prepared by the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness in Arlington, Virginia.

To date, hundreds of individual entities along with almost half the states and a set of regional partners are leading the work of credential transparency by stepping up and publishing data about education and training programs in the open-source Credential Registry, created in 2017 by Credential Engine.

For more information on Credential Engine and the complete findings of the report, view the full *Counting U.S. Postsecondary and Secondary Credentials* report.

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About Credential Engine

Credential Engine is a nonprofit organization that develops and maintains the technology infrastructure to enable a transparent and connected credential marketplace. The Credential Registry, started in 2016, currently houses nearly 20,000 credentials and competency frameworks from more than 450 providers—including close to 2,500 healthcare credentials—and includes everything from apprenticeships and certificates to certifications and degrees. Credential Engine receives Lumina Foundation, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Walmart, Google, Ascendium Education Group, Microsoft Philanthropies, the Siegel Family Endowment, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the ECMC Foundation.