Information Technology Career Apprenticeships

The Need

The information technology (IT) industry has been challenged to keep up with the demands of rapid technological advancements while employers are struggling to recruit, train, and retain IT employees. Simultaneously, individuals with an aptitude for high-skilled careers are working in lower-paying jobs and taking on increased student loan debt, because they can't find a pathway to careers in IT.

In order to connect employers with talent to close skills gaps, the U. S. Department of Labor has invested millions of dollars through multiple initiatives to increase access and awareness of the Registered Apprenticeship System.

The IT industry is at the forefront of these initiatives due to a shifting workforce and national security demands. Some of the most common IT apprenticeship occupations include:

- Cybersecurity
- Network administration
- Data science
- Cloud computing
- Programming
- Software development
- Help desk technician

Entities that focus on workforce development, job training, and education are consistently looking for ways to connect employers to individuals who are traditionally under-represented in technology fields. In recent years, the number of companies and organizations accepting apprenticeships in fields that traditionally required a college degree are increasing, and employers are recognizing their value.

Due to growing acceptance and adoption of apprenticeships, workforce boards, job training centers, educational institutions, and employers—both public and private—have more opportunities to promote apprenticeship benefits, but they often lack the expertise or resources needed to implement grants and establish public-private company/organization partnerships.

The Opportunity

Clark University was awarded a $12 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Scaling Apprenticeships Through Sector-Based Strategies. The grant was designed to facilitate the expansion of registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in the IT and IT-related industry sector. Utilizing these funds, the university created the Tech Quest Apprenticeship Consortium.

To address the challenges employers are encountering to fill critical IT skill needs, Clark University is partnering with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to create solutions and build processes for grant implementation through a consortium of registered apprenticeship sponsors and workforce boards across the country and global IT training providers (public and private).

The Strategy

With a core team of registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship experts, PCG is providing Clark University with an efficient strategy to implement IT apprenticeship expansion, as they support state and federal workforce systems navigating the workforce and apprenticeship ecosystem.

Comprehensive intermediary services include:

- Technical assistance, funding support, management, and administration for state and federal apprenticeship and workforce systems
- Strategic planning and implementation
- Marketing and communications support outreach
- Grant writing
- Equal employment opportunity (EEO) compliance
- Performance reporting

Kim Tesch-Vaught, PCG's program manager of the Tech Quest Apprenticeship Program, said, "The collaboration between Clark University, PCG, and the Tech Quest Apprenticeship Consortium has enabled us to expand career opportunities in IT, making it easier to navigate apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in the workforce systems. Tesch-Vaught continued, "This is a win-win strategy for organizations, employers, and the nation. We are excited to see the growth and potential that will stem from our efforts."

Outcomes

As a result of dedicated weekly meetings, trainings, technical assistance, and a pledge to collaborate with project stakeholders, PCG's team continuously meets the goals and objectives of the Tech Quest Apprenticeship grant and nurtures the relationship between PCG and Clark University.

Through this partnership:

- **Over 2,500 Tech Quest Apprenticeship participants have been placed** in IT-related pre-apprenticeships or apprenticeships.
- **Over 55 companies and organizations have offered IT-related apprenticeship opportunities across the U.S.**
- **Networking and contracts have increased** with strategic partners and organizations that are seeking services to build their organization.

At PCG, we're always ready to partner with you to unlock the potential of IT-focused apprenticeship programs in areas such as cybersecurity, telehealth, advanced manufacturing, telecommunications, and other non-traditional industries. Let us help you develop the workforce you need today and tomorrow to compete in the global market.

PCG. Let's solve it together.

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