



Workforce Training and
Education Coordinating Board

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June 26, 2012
IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAREER BRIDGE OFFERS “CONSUMER REPORT CARD” FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Nationally recognized website also provides career planning assistance, labor market data

Washington residents now have an improved tool to search for education programs that deliver the employment and pay they seek.

An upgraded CareerBridge.Wa.Gov launched with several new features last week—including easier home page access to labor market data on the demand and salaries of Washington jobs, along with a quiz that helps people connect their talents and abilities to a career.

The site’s signature feature—performance results for many of the state’s education programs—was also strengthened. The new site has performance results for more programs, and the results are more prominent and easier to find. Also, users are now able to search only for programs with performance results, further enhancing accountability. It’s the only website in the state, and probably the nation, with this kind of performance information.

Since its original launch in 2009, Career Bridge has provided a “consumer report card” on hundreds of Washington education programs, helping potential students make informed decisions on which programs are likely to provide a good return on investment. When possible, the site shows how many students completed an educational program, whether they got a job, and how much they earned.

Targeting an in-demand career area that pays a living wage is important to today’s students. The cost of education continues to rise, with tuition increases slated for the state’s two-year community and technical colleges and four-year colleges and universities.

“This promises to save our citizens untold dollars and time spent on education programs that don’t deliver the results they seek,” said Cindy Zehnder, chair of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. “In turn, public access to performance results drives greater transparency and accountability.”

Career Bridge is widely used in schools and colleges and at the state's one-stop employment centers, WorkSource. Users will appreciate the site's new look and feel, and enhanced navigability. They can now save their search results to a personal dashboard and find those results faster, thanks to speedier server connections.

The website also connects to employment data from the state's Employment Security Department so users can learn whether an occupation is in demand, what it pays on average and its projected growth rate.

"We all know that education can help increase a person's employability and wages," Zehnder said. "Career Bridge's tools provide a faster, easier and smarter way to know whether a particular education program is likely to pay off."

For more information about Career Bridge: <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/CareerBridge.asp>

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The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is a partnership of business, labor and government, dedicated to helping Washington residents obtain and succeed in family-wage jobs, while meeting employers' needs for skilled workers.