

## NATIONAL NECESSITY

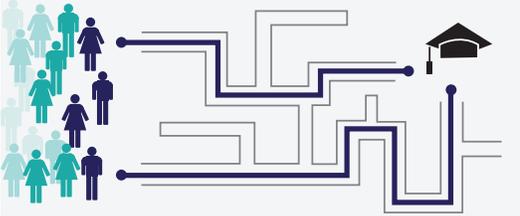


**MILLIONS OF ADULTS NEED ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO ADVANCE THEIR CAREERS AND SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES.**

The numbers are staggering:

- > Over 26 million adults lack a high school degree.
- > 93 million lack the basic literacy skills necessary to succeed and advance in college and the workplace.
- > 1.3 million young people drop out of high school every year.

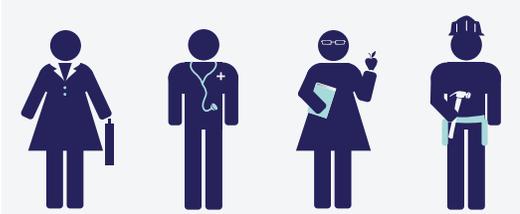
## INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS



**ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY TRANSFORMS ADULT BASIC EDUCATION TO ENSURE THAT MORE ADULTS CAN ACCESS AND SUCCEED IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING.**

Accelerating Opportunity increases credential attainment using evidence-based instructional and organizational models. It builds on the successes of Breaking Through and Washington State's experience with Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST).

## LASTING IMPACT



**STATES AND COLLEGES WILL SCALE AND SUSTAIN PROGRAMS SO THAT MANY MORE ADULTS HAVE ACCESS TO MARKETABLE CREDENTIALS AND FAMILY-SUPPORTING CAREERS.**

By addressing policy, systemic, and programmatic barriers, this initiative will ensure that students can:

- > Attain marketable, stackable credentials
- > Earn 12 or more college-level credits
- > Increase their readiness to succeed in colleges; and
- > Gain skills needed to succeed in employment.

By 2015, Accelerating Opportunity states will have awarded at least 18,000 postsecondary credentials.



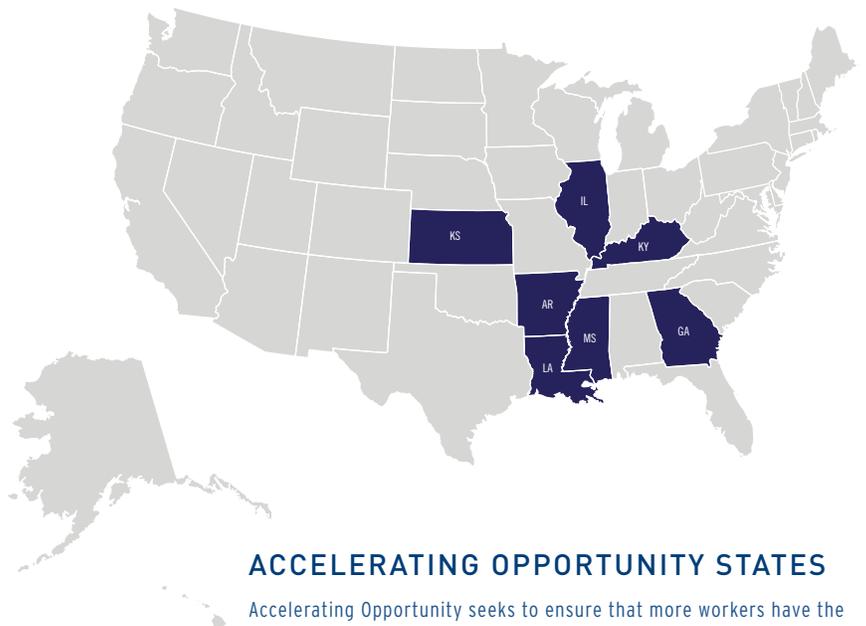
[WWW.ACCELERATINGOPPORTUNITY.ORG](http://WWW.ACCELERATINGOPPORTUNITY.ORG)

## ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY: A BREAKING THROUGH INITIATIVE

Accelerating Opportunity focuses on jobs, the economy, and improving opportunities for adults. This multiyear initiative aims to drive economic growth for individuals and communities by substantially increasing the number of adults who earn the credentials and skills they need to get and succeed in family-supporting careers.

Accelerating Opportunity supports states across the country in efforts to ensure that more workers have the skills they need for today's good jobs. Through innovative adult education that leads to valuable credentials, this multistate initiative seeks to:

- > Fundamentally change the way Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) are structured; and
- > Promote state and institution policies to dramatically increase the number of individuals who complete credentials of value in the labor market.



### ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY STATES

Accelerating Opportunity seeks to ensure that more workers have the skills they need for today's good jobs. Seven states currently participate in the implementation phase.

## BUILDING ON WHAT WORKS

Accelerating Opportunity builds on strategies developed through two groundbreaking initiatives: Breaking Through and Washington State's Integrating Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST).

## WHY I-BEST?

I-BEST challenges traditional notions that students must complete all levels of Adult Basic Education before advancing in workforce education training programs. Through I-BEST, students earn college-level professional-technical credits that are part of career pathways while simultaneously increasing their basic skills. Rigorous evaluations show that I-BEST students are far more likely to earn college credits and credentials than their counterparts in regular ABE/GED/ESL programs.

## WHY BREAKING THROUGH?

Breaking Through helps community colleges redesign programs for low-skilled adults through four high-leverage strategies: accelerated learning; comprehensive support services; labor market payoffs; and aligning programs for low-skilled adults. Breaking Through has engaged over 40 colleges across the country. In studies of colleges that scaled-up successful pilot programs, Breaking Through participants demonstrated significantly higher rates of retention and higher skill gains than non-Breaking Through students.

## ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY'S CORE STRATEGIES

All Accelerating Opportunity implementation states are charged with developing and scaling up career pathway designs that result in more ABE students completing credentials valued in the labor market. These nine strategic elements support that goal:

**Integrated Pathways:** Designing transparent systems of postsecondary education and training that integrate basic skills education and career and technical credit-bearing training; are linked to the local labor market; include embedded student supports; and have stackable certificates.

**Scale and Sustainability:** Breaking down silos within the college, institutionalizing the model, strengthening partnerships, and building out integrated pathways across the state.

**Culture Shift:** Changing attitudes and beliefs so that ABE students become seen as valued members of the student body, and ownership for ensuring ABE student success is ultimately shared across the state and campuses.

**Comprehensive Student Supports:** Embedding core student services such as tutoring, intrusive advising, student success courses, and career guidance directly into the model.

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Building a supportive network of stakeholders, including partners and champions of change, that increases alignment across systems; helps achieve policy change; adds resources to the initiative; and stretches its reach.

**Professional Development:** Creating an ongoing sequence of trainings and activities that support instructors, staff, and administrators throughout implementation.

**State Technical Assistance to Colleges:** Building college capacity, monitoring progress, and creating opportunities for peer learning.

**Policy:** Identifying high-impact policy levers—such as braided funding, common assessment practices, and student support services—that accelerate, support, scale up, and sustain the programmatic redesign.

**Leadership and Staff Commitment:** Making Accelerating Opportunity a state and college priority, sharing a clearly communicated vision, ensuring sufficient financial resources and staff capacity, and emphasizing accountability.



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

[WWW.JFF.ORG](http://WWW.JFF.ORG)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON  
ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY,  
PLEASE CONTACT:**

Barbara Endel, Program Director  
Jobs for the Future  
88 Broad Street, Boston, MA 02110  
[bendel@jff.org](mailto:bendel@jff.org) • 859.640.4296

**Jobs for the Future** works with our partners to design and drive the adoption of education and career pathways leading from college readiness to career advancement for those struggling to succeed in today's economy.

### Partners and Funders

Accelerating Opportunity is managed by Jobs for the Future, in partnership with the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the National Council for Workforce Education, and the National College Transition Network.

An unprecedented philanthropic investment in ABE, Accelerating Opportunity is funded by the Arthur M. Blank Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, and the University of Phoenix Foundation.