



MARCH 3, 2017

New Congress and renewed energy at the 2017 Skills Summit!

On February 5-7, more than 300 workforce advocates from 34 states traveled to

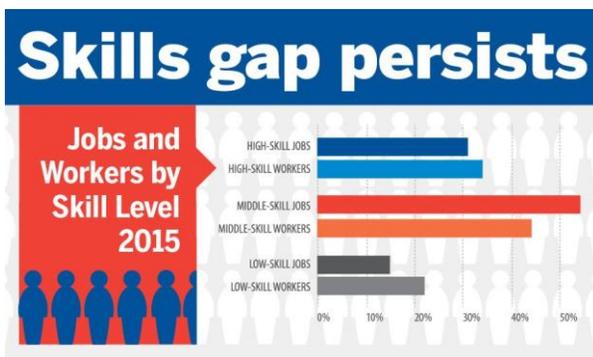


Washington D.C. to take their voices to Capitol Hill as part of NSC's annual [2017 Skills Summit](#). Workforce advocates, educators, public sector partners, community-based organizations, and labor leaders shared the [priorities of our coalition](#) with 200 members of the 115th Congress, reaching both majority and minority leadership, and meeting with members of all key committees. Read more on our [blog](#).

Demand remains strong for middle skills

NSC's latest analysis on middle-skill jobs reveals that the middle-skill gap persists in 2017 and beyond:

middle-skill jobs account for 53% of the U.S. labor market, but only 43% of workers are trained to the middle-skill level. As a result, employers in nearly every state in the country are facing a shortage of sufficiently trained workers to fill these jobs – affecting sectors like manufacturing, health care, and construction. With greater investments in training, low-wage workers could upskill for these middle-skill jobs, move up the career ladder, and earn family supporting wages. Read our [Skills Blog](#) for more.



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NSC IN THE NEWS

[Community College is Best Bet for Most Students](#) | *Education Week*, 2.6.17

[California Community Colleges and Workforce Development System join in Partnerships to Unlock Social Mobility](#) | *Lake County News*, 2.17.17

[Missouri's forgotten middle: Community college addresses critical workforce problem](#) | *The St. Louis American*, 2.14.17

[New Analysis: Middle-Skill Gap Means Mississippi Employers Struggle to Fill Key Jobs](#) | *Financial Buzz*, 2.14.17

[Closing middle-skill gap for workers](#) | *Mississippi Today*, 2.14.17

[Wanted: factory workers, degree required](#) | *Business and Industry Connection*, 2.16.17

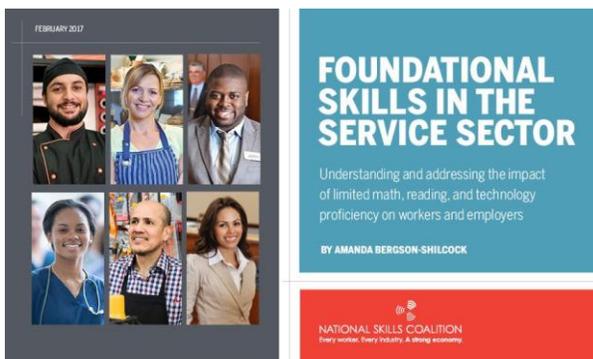
National Skills Coalition responds to President Trump's Address to the Joint Session of Congress

President Trump delivered a speech to a joint session of Congress on February 28, where he spoke about his plans to boost infrastructure spending. National Skills Coalition issued [the following statement](#) in response to the President's speech.



NSC's new report explores role of skill-building for service sector workers

A recent NSC report examines issues facing service sector workers with limited foundational skills and strategies for helping these workers upskill and achieve economic mobility. ***Foundational Skills in the Service Sector*** focuses on currently employed workers in retail, hospitality, and healthcare. The report includes examples of how employers are helping their workers build literacy, numeracy, and technology-related skills. It also includes recommendations for state and federal policymakers about how to support adult education and workplace learning opportunities for these workers. Check out our [blog post](#), read the [full report](#), and register for our [upcoming webinar](#) on March 16.



[CareerEdge Leaders Push for Pell Expansion](#) | *SRQ Magazine*, 2.16.17

[Marshall: Lynchburg Success Story an Example for Virginia](#) | *News and Advance*, 2.19.17

[ECC creates apprenticeship program for local workforce](#) | *The Rolla Daily News*, 2.21.17

[CTE prepares student for careers, not jobs](#) | *Abilene Reporter News*, 2.25.17

[Baby boomers retrain in sought-after skills](#) | *Marketplace*, 2.27.17

[Facing skills gap, employers send workers to college](#) | *Marketplace*, 2.28.17

PARTNER RESOURCE

The Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) has recently released [fact sheets](#) and [videos](#) on the need for adult education.

CONNECT WITH US



Programs that work

A joint WDQC-National Skills Coalition publication, [Programs that Work: Quality Assurance for Short-term Occupational Programs](#), discusses why existing quality assurance mechanisms for academic and workforce training programs are insufficient to gauge the quality of short-term programs leading to industry credentials. The publication also provides policy recommendations for directing state and federal financial aid to high-quality short-term programs that provide career-driven training.



Programs That Work

Quality Assurance For Short-Term Occupational Programs

JENNA LEVENTOFF
JANUARY 2017



Thank you for your quick action for skills!

This month, National Skills Coalition joined with more than **30 other national organizations** as part of the Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (CIAW) to send a [letter](#) to Congressional appropriators urging them to maintain or increase funding for key education and workforce programs as part of any final Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 appropriations bill.



With the threat of further funding cuts, it is more important than ever to ensure that lawmakers understand the value of federal workforce and education programs. In the coming months, NSC will be reaching out to our state and local partners through petitions, sign-on letters, and other opportunities that allow us to jointly urge lawmakers to support the full range of federal programs that help Americans get family supporting jobs.

Upcoming webinars

National Skills Coalition will be hosting a series of webinars during the next month, covering topics like [skills in the service sector](#), [short-term program quality](#), and the [State Workforce and Education Alignment Project](#). Visit our [website](#) to learn more and register.



Meet Claudia!

NSC's newest team member, [Claudia Arango](#), provides fundraising support to the development department and executive offices, including researching new funder prospects, managing outreach to donors and members, producing timely reports, and stewarding relationships.



On the road with NSC

- CEO Andy Van Kleunen provided an overview of likely federal workforce policy issues in 2017 to a [General Electric Foundation](#) national conference call of companies, colleges, and service providers affiliated with the foundation.
- Andy also participated in American Association of Community Colleges, [Workforce Development Institute](#)'s national conference opening plenary on federal policy issues facing CTE programs at community colleges in Newport Beach, CA
- He also met with the [Youth Transition Funders Group](#) to offer foundations NSC's views on options for helping low-income youth and young adults within the current policy environment in Washington, D.C.
- Federal Policy Director Kermit Kaleba participated in a panel entitled, "Communities Aligned for Career Pathways" at the [Corps Network 2017 National Conference](#) in Washington on February 13th, providing an overview of key findings from NSC's "[Promising Practices in Work-Based Learning for Youth](#)" paper.
- Kermit also presented at the National Association of Regional Council's [National Conference of Regions](#) on February 14th, discussing the intersections between

workforce, economic development, and transportation planning efforts.

- State Network Director Brooke DeRenzis spoke at a briefing on Mississippi's Integrated Basic and Education Skills Training Program ("MI-BEST") for the Mississippi House of Representatives Workforce Development Committee.
- Director of Upskilling Policy Amanda Bergson-Shilcock moderated the panel *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Employment Pathways for Young Men of Color* at the [Corps Network](#) conference in Washington D.C.
- Amanda also presented a [webinar](#) on *Advocating for Adult Education: How to Advance State and Federal Policies that Support Your Learners* in partnership with the [Coalition on Adult Basic Education](#) (COABE).
- WDQC Director Rachel Zinn spoke in Atlanta at an annual meeting of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program managers from southern states. She offered suggestions for using data to comply with new federal reporting mandates and help improve program design.
- WDQC Policy Analyst Jenna Leventoff served on a panel at the 2017 Workforce Data Quality Initiative Annual Convening, in Arlington, Virginia. She discussed how a shift in focus to state data policy provides an opportunity for better collaboration among states.

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