

Career Connect Washington: Building a stronger future

Washington has one of the strongest economies in the nation — an economy driven largely by innovation and a diverse, talented workforce. To keep our economy thriving, we must make sure our next generation is fully prepared for the high-demand, high-wage careers in today's labor market.

In the next five years alone, there will be hundreds of thousands of job openings in our state. Unfortunately, many young people do not have access to adequate education and training opportunities or the high-impact experiences that develop the skills necessary to be competitive for those jobs, such as career exploration, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships and paid internships.

To ensure our young people have the skills they need — and our businesses and industries have an adequate pool of talent — we must invest in creating a career-connected learning system that provides opportunities for all students.

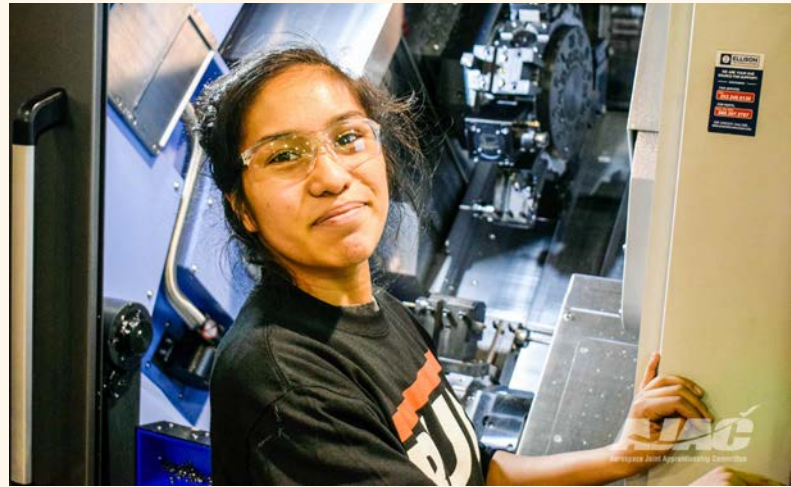
Last year, Gov. Inslee launched the Career Connect Washington initiative, a public-private partnership with the five-year goal of connecting 100,000 young people with employer internships, registered apprenticeships and other learning opportunities.

The governor created the Career Connect Washington Task Force to determine how to better align education programs with career opportunities. Earlier this year, the task force — composed of leaders from business, labor, state government, nonprofit organizations and education — delivered recommendations for improving Washington's registered apprenticeship and career-connected learning programs.

Based on the task force's recommendations and to ensure that every student in Washington has meaningful hands-on career experiences and pathways to economic self-sufficiency, the governor proposes \$93 million in new investments through his operating and capital budgets. These include:

Regional career connected learning networks

Create career connected learning opportunities that meet local employer and community needs through a competitive grant program. The program will support regional networks of business, labor, education



and nonprofit organizations to work together to identify and develop career awareness; prepare career launch programs to meet the needs of their region; and expand innovations across the state. The Employment Security Department will administer the new competitive grant program in partnership with the Office of the Governor. Program intermediaries may include school districts, higher education institutions, workforce development councils, chambers of commerce, nonprofit organizations, labor organizations and industry associations. (\$32.7 million General Fund-State)

Student support

Direct resources to K-12 and higher education partners to support student enrollment in dual credit and career and technical education courses, registered apprenticeships, State Work Study and career launch programs. The capital budget includes competitive grants to purchase and install career preparation and career launch equipment at high schools, skills centers, and the community and technical colleges. (\$30.3 million GF-S; \$17.5 million state bonds)

Statewide system and coordination

Develop a statewide career connected learning system through cross-agency coordination and better data collection. Six agencies will receive additional staffing to support system changes and facilitate collaboration across sectors. Partner agencies are the Department of Labor and Industries, Employment Security Department, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Washington Student Achievement Council and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. (\$12.1 million GF-S)