Adult Credentialing: A Unifying Message to Oregonians

Where does Oregon stand today?

The critical need to ensure that Oregonians possess needed credentials is embodied in the 40-40-20 goal of the Joint Boards of Education—by 2025, 40% of Oregonians will hold a Bachelor's degree or higher; 40% will attain a post-secondary credential; and 20% will have at least a high school diploma. Reaching this goal will require building upon current flexibility in delivery systems, innovative financing methods, comprehensive student support structures and evidence-based practices in education.

The fact remains, however, that Oregon is home to 300,000 adults who don't have high school degrees. Left unaddressed, this spells hardship for individuals who can't earn a living wage. It also poses a long-term drag on the state's economy, making it harder to attract new employers and straining social service networks that already are well beyond capacity.

In addition, less than 30% of the workers in Oregon with a bachelor's degree or above were born in the state. Most higher-skilled workers have been imported from other states and countries. A truly vibrant state economy depends on ensuring that Oregonians earn the credentials they need to compete for high-wage, high-skills jobs.

Leaders in the state have been collaborating to define tangible steps that will take Oregon to the next level. They are optimizing finite resources while looking for new ways to fill funding gaps. Meanwhile, the value of education and credentialing, both for individuals and for the state, needs to be broadly communicated.

How will a unifying message help advance adult credentialing in Oregon?

Oregon's leaders share a vision. They recognize educational attainment as key to prosperity for individuals and for the collective economy. Until recently, however, they did not have a unifying message. Now they do. The message's simple structure and universal appeal urge people to take the next step in discovering and achieving their career-related goals. The message is designed for broad dissemination by any Oregon educational institution or program that wants to use it.

"Educational attainment is a powerful predictor of future earning power and workforce participation at both the individual and state level. Not only do educated workers have greater career mobility and higher wages, but a state's overall per capita income is strongly associated with the proportion of adults holding postsecondary degrees or credentials in that state."

— NGA Best Practices Whitepaper, "Increasing Postsecondary Credential Attainment Among Adult Workers: A Model for Governors," 2009

What is the message?

Find your future.

Everyone has a future to discover. Some people easily recognize their goals, while others take longer to know where they want to go. The process of discovery can be an important part of understanding your talents.

No one should believe they are limited by today's job market. New careers and opportunities are emerging in the 21st century based on new technology, new products and new markets. In the decades ahead, your ability to make a good living—get a job, earn a salary, support a family—will depend on what you know.

Must you have all the answers today? Of course not. Examine your options and explore the possibilities. Whether you're starting out, applying for a promotion or looking for a career change, take action. Right here in Oregon you'll find resources to get started and move toward the life you want for yourself. Go ahead. Find your future.

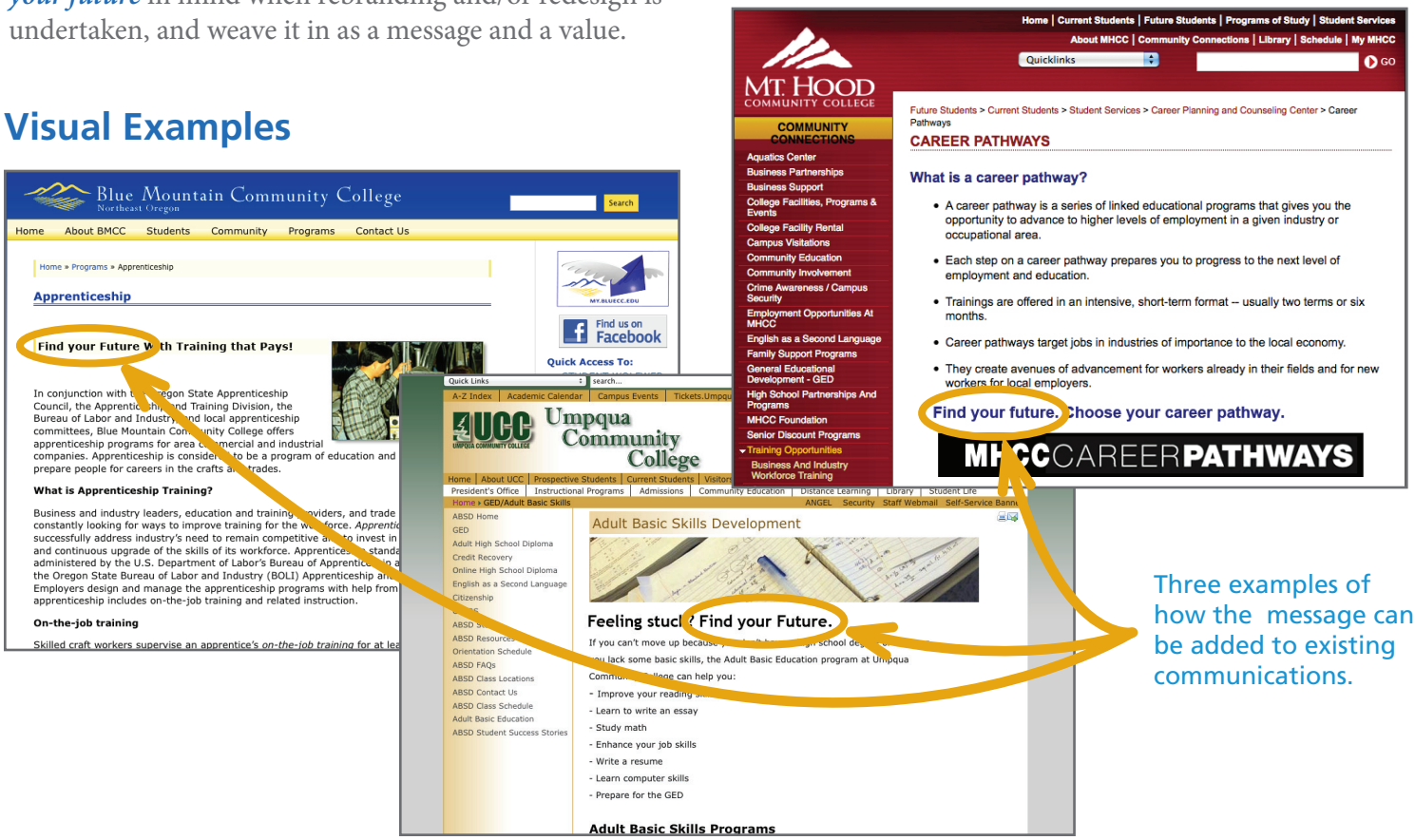
How will it work?

Applying ***Find your future*** is easy. You can start by simply incorporating the message into your existing communications—for example, add it to a headline on a web page, or use it as a closing statement. It can be used stand-alone or in conjunction with existing headlines and text. See illustrations below for ideas on how to use it.

Then, consider how your institution is uniquely suited to help someone find their future, and write your own copy to reinforce the message. Add it to marketing materials and instructional guides as they are printed. Keep ***Find your future*** in mind when rebranding and/or redesign is undertaken, and weave it in as a message and a value.

Find your future is neither a brand nor a slogan. ***Find your future*** is designed to be integrated into the existing communication platforms of institutions of higher education, as well as programs that support adult learning and career development. As it is voluntarily adopted and used, it has the potential to evolve into a statewide campaign. Implementation comes at little or no cost and requires no displacement of existing communications by the respective organizations. The only compliance request is to not adopt ***Find your future*** as your institution's or program's brand.

Visual Examples



Three examples of how the message can be added to existing communications.

Writing Examples

Find your future can be applied in a wide range of scenarios that are applicable to adult learners. You can ***Find your future*** … in a new job … with further education … by expanding your skills … as you complete a degree … to earn a promotion … to improve your incoming-earning ability … to achieve greater stability … to prepare for global job market … to be ready for industry advances … to position Oregonians for increasing global competition … and on and on.

How do I learn more?

If you would like to speak with someone about how your institution or program could integrate ***Find you future*** into your communications, please contact Katelyn Roberts at the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development.
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