



**Career
Technical
Initiative
2025
ANNUAL
REPORT**

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Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Lauren Jones and state and local legislators visit Greater Lawrence Technical School.

INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Career Technical Initiative (CTI) continues to serve as a cornerstone of Massachusetts' workforce development strategy, equipping residents with the skills needed to thrive in high-demand industries such as manufacturing, construction, and the skilled trades. Established by the Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) in 2020, CTI represents a strong partnership between state government, education, and industry aimed at expanding access to high-quality technical training and strengthening the Commonwealth's talent pipeline. CTI remains a key driver in addressing workforce shortages and ensuring employers have access to credentialed, job-ready workers, while expanding its reach statewide with strong support from the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Legislature.

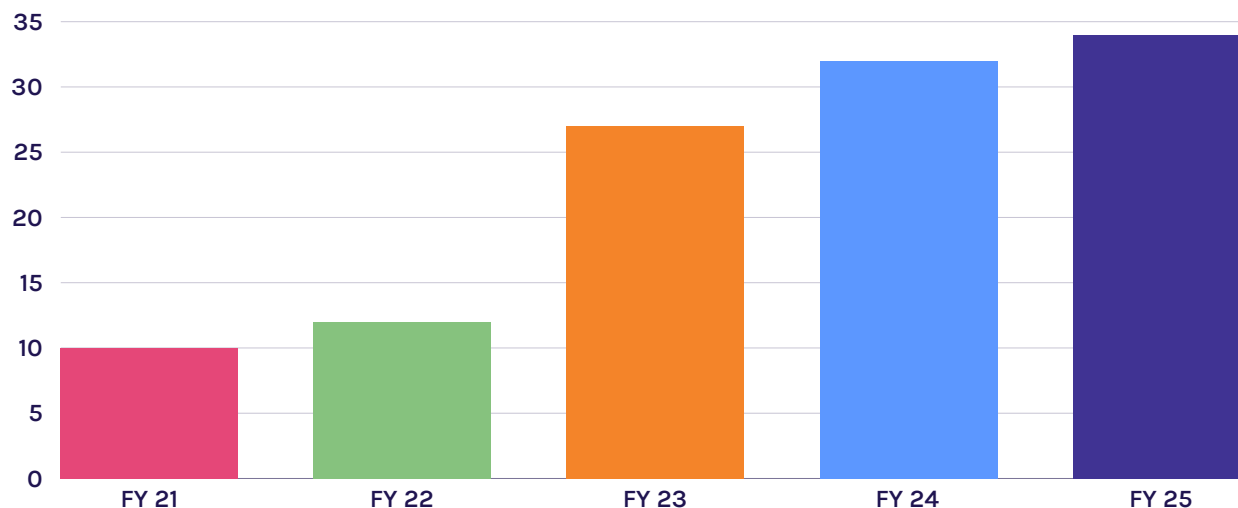
CTI leverages the capacity of the state's vocational technical schools and their Chapter 74 programs, which combine academic learning with practical, hands-on training. These schools utilize their facilities to train unemployed and underemployed adults in the evenings and on weekends, optimizing the use of public resources to deliver industry-aligned training. Through this model, CTI supports Massachusetts residents' transitions into stable, family-sustaining jobs while meeting the workforce needs of local employers.

The CTI model fosters strong collaboration between vocational schools, MassHire Career Centers, regional workforce boards, and employers. Together, these partners identify employer demand, design training programs aligned with those needs, recruit eligible participants, and support job placement following program completion. This coordinated approach ensures CTI programs remain responsive to evolving regional labor market conditions.

Administered by Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) on behalf of the WSC, CTI has steadily grown since its inception. Programming began in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 with 10 participating schools, then grew to 12 in FY22, 27 in FY23, 32 in FY24, and 34 in FY25. As of June 2025, CTI served more than 4,600 participants across 20 high-demand career pathway programs statewide.



ANNUAL GROWTH IN CTI SCHOOLS FROM FY21 TO FY25



CTI is supported through annual state budget appropriations, with additional one-time funding of \$25 million provided through the 2021 federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). To date, a total of \$98.3 million has been appropriated for CTI, of which \$88.4 million has been made available for funding, and \$68.3 million has been awarded across ten funding rounds. Remaining funds will be distributed through future requests for proposals in FY26 and subsequent years.

The state budget line item for CTI (7002-1091) calls for a report to be filed with the joint committee on labor and workforce development and the house and senate committees on ways and means that shall include, but not be limited to:

“(i) a list of vocational technical schools that are operating career technical institutes; (ii) the amount of funding each vocational-technical school will receive under this item; (iii) the number of students served by career technical institutes, including technical institutes established in chapter 74 of the General Laws and the number of adult learners participating in industry recognized credentialing pathways at each vocational-technical school, delineated by training program; and (iv) the employment outcomes of the graduates of the training programs.”

This report presents an overview of CTI’s statewide impact, including data on enrollment, completion, employment outcomes, and participant demographics. Final job placement data are available for all CTI funding rounds that have concluded (rounds 1-5). Enrollment and demographic data are available for rounds one through nine. Programming for Round 10 will begin in Fall 2025, and corresponding data will be included in subsequent reports as it becomes available.

ABOUT CTI

The Career Technical Initiative (CTI) celebrated its fifth year since launching its first cohort in 2021. Administered by Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) and established by the Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) in 2020, CTI is a key element of Massachusetts' strategy to meet the Commonwealth's persistent demand for skilled workers in construction, manufacturing, and the skilled trades. CTI strengthens the alignment between education, workforce, and industry by funding vocational schools to expand adult training opportunities. CommCorp is a quasi-public state agency under the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD).

CTI builds on the state's existing network of Chapter 74 vocational technical programs, leveraging school facilities and equipment to provide training for adult learners during evening and weekend hours. This "after dark" model allows schools to operate as "Career Technical Institutes," extending access to career-focused technical education beyond traditional school hours. Through this model, CTI maximizes public investment in vocational infrastructure while ensuring that more individuals can gain the hands-on experience and industry-recognized credentials needed to enter high-demand careers in their communities.

CTI serves unemployed and underemployed Massachusetts residents seeking to build skills, obtain credentials, and secure meaningful employment. Many participants face barriers to entering or re-entering the workforce due to limited access to relevant training or lack of industry credentials. CTI programs address these barriers by integrating case management, work readiness training, and job placement services delivered in collaboration with MassHire Career Centers to support participants from enrollment through employment.

By aligning training with local and regional labor market demand, CTI helps employers address critical workforce shortages while providing residents with pathways to economic advancement. In this way, CTI remains an essential link connecting Massachusetts' educational institutions, the MassHire workforce system, and the businesses that drive its economy.



CTI program participants at Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH



Program participants at Lynn Vocational Technical Institute.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

CTI relies on strong partnerships across the Commonwealth to ensure programs are aligned with regional workforce needs and responsive to employer demand. CTI-funded schools collaborate closely with employers as well with their local MassHire Workforce Board and MassHire Career Center to identify high-demand occupations, recruit and screen participants, and support graduates in securing employment upon completion of their training. These partnerships remain essential to ensuring CTI programs deliver meaningful outcomes for both program participants and businesses.

UPSKILLING NAVIGATORS

Upskilling Navigators, based at MassHire Career Centers throughout Massachusetts, play a critical role in connecting residents to CTI and other state-funded training opportunities. They streamline outreach, recruitment, and screening efforts, ensuring that candidates are well-matched to available training programs. Drawing on their knowledge of regional industries and labor market trends, Upskilling Navigators provide case management and work readiness training that support participants transition smoothly from training into employment. Their coordination with CTI schools ensures consistent communication between program staff, students, and employers throughout the training and placement process.

BUSINESS SERVICES REPRESENTATIVES

Business services representatives at the MassHire career centers play a key role in strengthening employer engagement and promoting workforce training opportunities. They cultivate employer partnerships, identify hiring needs, and connect businesses with training providers and funding opportunities. Through these efforts, they help ensure that CTI programs remain closely aligned with current and emerging workforce demands within each region.

EMPLOYERS

Employers are integral to the CTI model as their input shapes the design and relevance of training programs, ensuring instruction reflects current technologies, practices, and credential requirements. Employers collaborate with CTI schools and regional workforce partners to refine curricula, advise on in-demand skills, and provide instructors when appropriate. Many employers also offer work-based learning experiences or internships that give participants hands-on exposure to real-world work environments. Upon completion of training, employers frequently hire CTI graduates, reinforcing the program's success in building sustainable talent pipelines for Massachusetts' high-demand industries.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

MASSACHUSETTS WORKFORCE SKILLS FUND

The Massachusetts Workforce Skills Fund is a pilot initiative launched in September 2024 by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) in partnership with the Commonwealth Corporation. The pilot leveraged federal ARPA funding to provide stipends to un- and underemployed individuals enrolled in eligible CTI or Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) training programs, helping to cover living expenses during training, which supports participant retention.

During the pilot, participants received stipends of \$3,000 for programs lasting 90 days or less, and \$5,000 for programs over 90 days. Payments were made in three installments tied to key milestones: enrollment, program completion, and employment. From September 2024 to June 2025, a total of 690 CTI participants received stipends.

Backed by \$6.1 million in federal ARPA funding and administered by the Public Consulting Group as the fiscal vendor, this pilot promoted pipeline development in needed occupational areas and helped participants reach career goals. This pilot project concluded at the end of 2025, with final results to be shared in the CTI ARPA Report scheduled for release in June 2026.



Program participants at Lynn Vocational Technical Institute.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

GE VERNOVA FOUNDATION SUPPORTING CTI

The Commonwealth Corporation Foundation - a 501(c)(3) nonprofit supporting the mission of Commonwealth Corporation - addresses resource gaps by targeting unmet workforce development needs and empowering workers and employers in Massachusetts. This is achieved through strategic partnerships with the business community, organizing events, and making grants that drive innovation in workforce training.

In FY25, the Commonwealth Corporation Foundation received a \$300,000 grant from the GE Vernova Foundation to support CTI's clean energy programs. This investment was matched by an additional \$300,000 from the Executive Office of Education, doubling the total funding available to expand clean energy training opportunities.

The GE Vernova Foundation grant enables CTI programs to procure training equipment that integrates solar and wind technologies into electrical programs as well as heat pump and solar technologies into HVAC programs, based on regional employer demand. In addition, both CTI and Career and Technical Education (CTE) school staff will benefit from professional development on the new equipment and participation in communities of practice.

In April 2025, four CTI schools were awarded funding through this opportunity:

- Attleboro Technical Institute received \$59,540 to train 104 participants in heat pump technology.
- Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School (\$260,110) is projected to enroll 270 participants to receive training in solar, wind and heat pump technologies.
- Nashoba Valley Technical High School (\$32,295) will provide training in solar and wind technologies to 150 participants.
- Salem High School (\$93,010) will train 156 participants in heat pump technology.



Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Secretary Lauren Jones, the Commonwealth Corporation Foundation, and the GE Vernova Foundation visit Keefe Regional Technical School.

CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES & **GRANT AWARDS**



CTI program participant at Greater Lowell Technical High School.

CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND GRANT AWARDS

CTI launched in 2020 with 10 participating vocational schools supported through the FY21 state budget appropriation. In December 2021, the WSC allocated an additional \$25 million in ARPA funds to expand participation across the Commonwealth.

Since then, the program has continued to grow, expanding to 12 schools in FY22, 27 schools in FY23, 32 schools in FY24, and 34 schools in FY25. Of the \$98.3 million appropriated through combined state and ARPA funding, of which \$88.4 million has been made available for funding, \$68.3 million has been awarded to date across all funding rounds, including rounds one through ten and Planning Grants.

CTI FY21-FY25 FUNDING

The table below provides a summary of total funding awarded to each CTI school for planning, start-up, and implementation, and other training-related expenses from the program's inception in January 2020 through December 2025. ¹

GRANTEE NAME	PLANNING	START-UP /IMPLEMENTATION	TOTAL AWARDS ²
Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District	x	x	\$3,219,452.99
Attleboro High School		x	\$2,302,403.10
Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School		x	\$1,040,000.00
Blue Hills Regional Technical School		x	\$813,070.91
Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School		x	\$171,634.30
Cape Cod Regional Technical High School		x	\$99,019.46
City of Westfield/Westfield Public Schools	x		\$3,559.00
Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School		x	\$7,124,284.94
Franklin County Technical School	x	x	\$4,113,257.31
Greater Fall River Vocational School District		x	\$344,280.00

¹ CommCorp and the WSC engaging schools in FY26 and plan to continue doing so in the following fiscal years.

² The exact amount ultimately received by schools may be less than the award amount and is the result of applying performance metrics to the use of funds throughout planning, start-up and implementation phases.

CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND GRANT AWARDS CONTINUED

GRANTEE NAME	PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION/ START UP	TOTAL AWARDS
Greater Lawrence Technical School		x	\$4,569,367.74
Greater Lowell Technical High School		x	\$2,298,500.00
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School	x	x	\$802,812.99
Keefe Regional Vocational Technical School		x	\$1,816,754.00
Lynn Vocational Tech High School		x	\$1,410,000.00
Madison Park Technical Vocational High School		x	\$1,931,157.74
McCann Technical School	x	x	\$583,820.66
Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District		x	\$4,236,280.88
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School		x	\$2,649,669.54
Nashoba Valley Technical High School		x	\$3,018,441.20
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School		x	\$833,985.66
Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical School District		x	\$1,512,000.00
Salem Public Schools		x	\$2,345,919.01
Somerville Public Schools	x		\$50,000.00
Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School		x	\$1,033,870.89
Southeastern Regional School District		x	\$1,763,450.74

CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND GRANT AWARDS CONTINUED

GRANTEE NAME	PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION/ START UP	TOTAL FUNDING
Southern Worcester County RVSD (Bay Path)		x	\$2,786,251.24
South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School	x	x	\$6,938,481.97
Taconic High School	x	x	\$300,000.00
Taunton High School		x	\$73,756.19
Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District		x	\$2,536,541.99
Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School	x	x	\$1,455,948.41
Weymouth Public Schools		x	\$425,727.45
Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School		x	\$3,154,886.12
Worcester Public Schools	x	x	\$536,085.76
Total			\$68,294,672.19

ENROLLMENT GROWTH

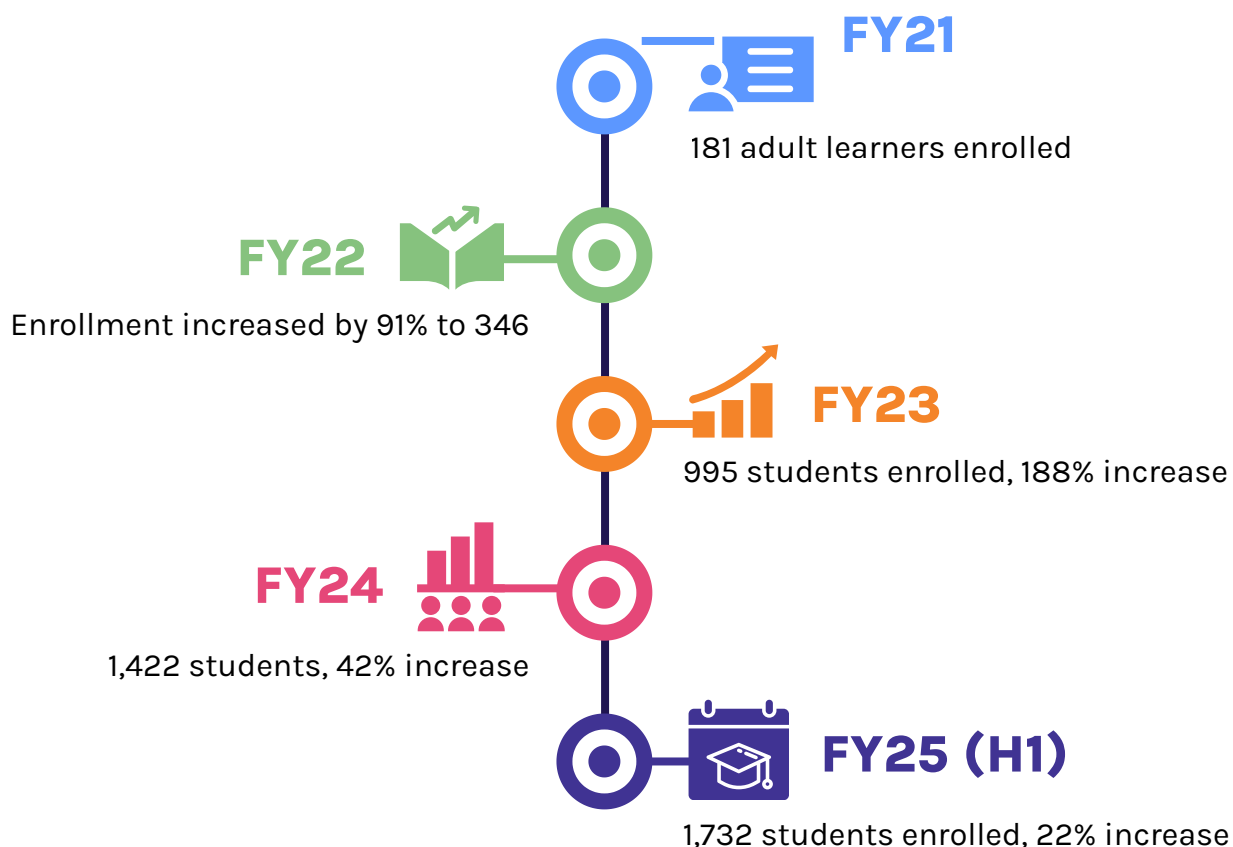


CTI program participant at Greater Lawrence Technical School.

ENROLLMENT GROWTH

Since its launch in 2020, CTI has demonstrated steady and substantial enrollment growth, reflecting strong demand for career-focused training and increasing awareness of the program across the Commonwealth.

CTI grants operate on a two-year cycle, with enrollment occurring at varying times depending on each grantee's schedule. In FY21, CTI schools enrolled 181 adult learners in manufacturing, construction, and trades pathways. Enrollment grew by 91% in FY22 to 346 students, then climbed to 995 students in FY23 - an increase of 188%. The upward trajectory continued in FY24, reaching 1,422 students, a further 42% increase over the previous year. During FY25, 1,732 students enrolled, a 22% increase, bringing total enrollment across all funding rounds to 4,676 adult learners to date. This consistent growth underscores CTI's expanding impact in meeting regional workforce needs and creating accessible training pathways for unemployed and underemployed individuals.



Including both actual as well as projected enrollments across all funding rounds, CTI projects to serve more than 7,200 total participants through December 2026. As enrollment continues for ongoing rounds eight through ten, an update will be included in the CTI ARPA Report in June 2026.

ENROLLMENT GROWTH

GRANTEE NAME	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (ROUNDS 1-9)
Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District	191
Attleboro High School	91
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School	99
Blue Hills Technical School	83
Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School	17
Cape Cod Regional Tech High School	13
Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School	470
Franklin County Technical School	209
Greater Fall River Vocational School (Diman)	40
Greater Lawrence Technical School	459
Greater Lowell Technical High School	179
Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School	92
Keefe Regional Vocational Technical School	73
Lynn Vocational Technical Institute	73
Madison Park Vocational Technical High School	243
McCann Technical School	37
Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School	221
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School	254
Nashoba Valley Technical High School	286

ENROLLMENT GROWTH CONTINUED

GRANTEE NAME	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (ROUNDS 1-8)
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School	60
Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School	55
Salem High School	107
Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School	56
South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School	394
Southeastern Technical Institute	188
Taunton High School	6
Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District	181
Upper Cape Cod Technical School	104
Weymouth High School	38
Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District	297
Worcester Public Schools	39
Total	4,676



ENROLLMENT GROWTH CONTINUED

The enrollment summary in the table below highlights strong participation across all 20 training pathways. Welding remains the most popular choice, with 973 enrollments across all rounds, followed by Automotive Technology (663), HVAC (545), Carpentry (529), and Plumbing (517). Together, these five pathways account for 69% of total CTI enrollment, representing 3,227 participants. This continued interest underscores the Commonwealth's sustained demand for hands-on technical training in high-growth industries.

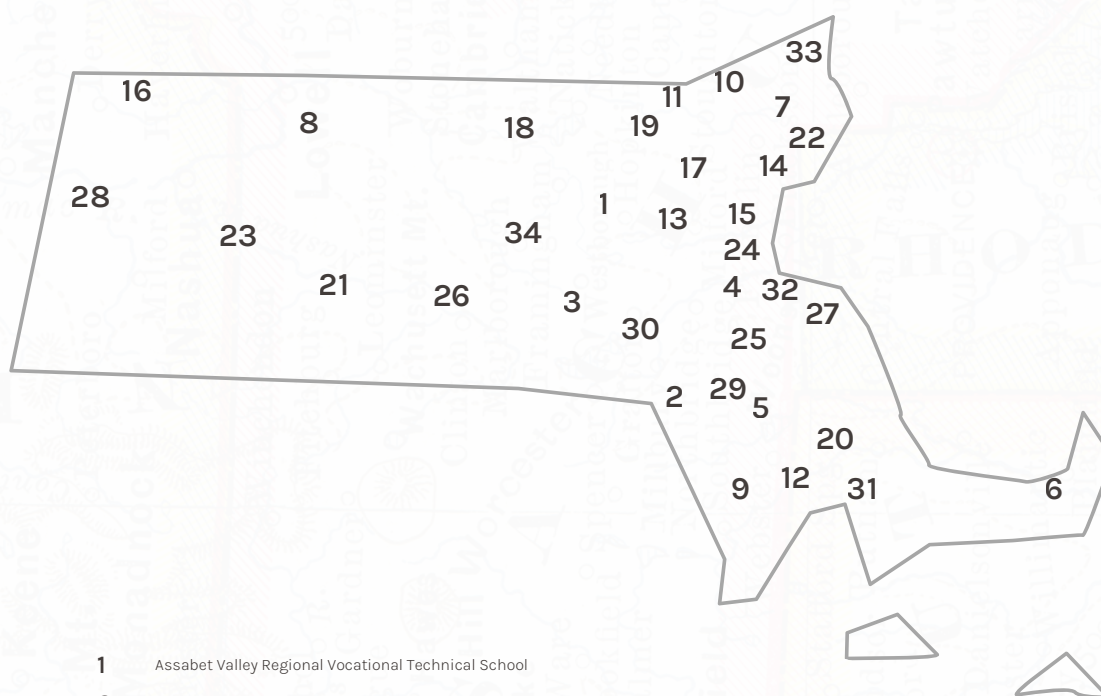
Although some pathways have smaller enrollment numbers, they are equally vital for meeting specialized workforce demands and cultivating a diverse pool of skilled talent. Overall, CTI's broad reach across all 20 WSC-approved pathways demonstrates its continued impact in expanding access to high-quality technical training statewide.

TRAINING PATHWAY	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (ROUNDS 1-9)
Advanced Manufacturing	203
Auto Body/Collision Repair	118
Automotive Technology	663
Biotechnology Lab Tech	31
Carpentry	529
Construction Labor	49
Culinary Arts	294
Diesel Technician	8
Electrical	440
Electrical Systems Tech	16
Electronics Tech/Robotics	58
Groundskeeping & Equipment	68
HVAC	545
Machine Technology	48
Marine Trades Tech	35
Plumbing	517
Property Maintenance	81
Welding/Metal Fabrication	973
Grand Total	4,676

CTI SCHOOLS FUNDED TO DATE

CTI provides funding to 34 schools with Chapter 74-approved programs across all seven regions participating in regional blueprint planning. The initiative continues to expand its geographic footprint to ensure broader access to technical training statewide.

A key focus of CTI remains the revitalization of the workforce in Gateway Cities, where economic mobility and workforce development are urgently needed. Across funding rounds one through ten, 11 of the 34 participating schools were located in Gateway Cities, collectively serving 2,044 participants - or 44% of all CTI enrollments to date. This ongoing priority reflects CTI's commitment to regional workforce alignment across the Commonwealth.

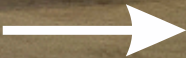


- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School | 19 | Nashoba Valley Technical High School |
| 2 | Attleboro High School | 20 | Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School |
| 3 | Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School | 21 | Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School District |
| 4 | Blue Hills Regional Technical School | 22 | Salem Public Schools |
| 5 | Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School | 23 | Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School |
| 6 | Cape Cod Regional Technical High School | 24 | Somerville Public Schools |
| 7 | Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School | 25 | Southeastern Regional School District |
| 8 | Franklin County Technical School | 26 | Southern Worcester County RVSD (Bay Path) |
| 9 | Greater Fall River Vocational School District | 27 | South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School |
| 10 | Greater Lawrence Technical School | 28 | Taconnic High School |
| 11 | Greater Lowell Technical School | 29 | Taunton High School |
| 12 | Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School | 30 | Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District |
| 13 | Keefe Regional Technical School | 31 | Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School |
| 14 | Lynn Vocational Tech High School | 32 | Weymouth Public Schools |
| 15 | Madison Park Technical Vocational High School | 33 | Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School |
| 16 | McCann Technical School | 34 | Worcester Public Schools |
| 17 | Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District | | |
| 18 | Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District | | |

SUCCESS STORY



CTI graduate Anayah Cortez is stepping into her future with confidence.



From Curiosity to Career: How CTI and Whittier Tech Opened the Auto Collision Path for Anayah Cortez



Anayah Cortez at Whittier Tech.

On a summer afternoon inside Whittier Tech’s auto collision repair shop, the air carries the sharp scent of fresh paint and rubber. Tools tap steadily across metal panels while students move between cars lifted on hydraulic stands, sanding fenders, prepping bumpers, and checking paint lines. At the center of the shop stands Anayah Cortez with a big smile, grounded and focused, completely at ease in a space where her future finally came into view.

Cortez, a 2025 graduate of Haverhill High School, said she had always been intrigued by cars, but she didn’t know how to turn that interest into something real. “Since I was younger, I always had a special fondness for cars,” Cortez said. “I was super driven, but I never knew how to get started or where I fit.”

She first learned about Whittier Tech through a spring Exploratory program that allowed local high school seniors to rotate through eight vocational areas. It was her first chance to experience technical training up close. Cortez said she used machines in manufacturing, tried welding, bent metal into flowers, assembled pipes in plumbing, and cooked full meals in culinary, but everything pointed her back to auto body. That early exposure became the bridge that led her directly into the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) after graduation.



CTI participant with instructor Paul DeBenedictis.

That pathway into CTI is intentional. Tia Gerber, Whittier’s Director of Community Partnerships, said the Exploratory rotation is designed to give seniors “access to careers they may never have known were available.” She explained that students are encouraged to “experience all eight technical areas, discover what they enjoy, and then move directly into CTI after graduation if they choose.” Gerber added that Cortez is “the perfect example of a student who came in with curiosity, explored her options, and used that exposure to launch straight into a CTI training program.”

Once she entered CTI, the impact was immediate. Superintendent Maureen Lynch said the initiative has become a cornerstone of workforce development in the region. “We are proud to have been one of the first schools to participate in CTI,” Lynch said. “Since 2020, we have helped more than three hundred Massachusetts residents gain access to high-quality career training.” She explained that the program delivers two hundred hours of hands-on instruction across advanced manufacturing, auto body, carpentry, construction, culinary arts, electrical, plumbing, and welding. “These programs change lives and strengthen our regional workforce,” Lynch said. She also highlighted CTI’s employer network. “We could not do this without our industry partners. More than sixty companies across nine industries work with us to train and hire our students. Their support is vital.”

For Cortez, the CTI Auto Collision Repair program became the turning point. “Getting accepted felt unreal,” she said. “It gave me the opportunity to expand my passion through my own hands and get my fingertips on my dream of working on cars.”

Inside the shop, she found guidance and mentorship from Paul “Mr. D” DeBenedictis, an instructor with more than thirty years of industry experience. “She really had a strong drive in the shop,” DeBenedictis said. He described his teaching philosophy simply: “Helping students find their motivation is central to the work. Auto collision is a big puzzle, and they need to learn every piece.” He also emphasized the industry’s need for new talent. “Cars are not going away. This is a growing field, and we need young blood. Students like Anayah are exactly who the industry needs right now.”

Cortez said the CTI environment helped her build confidence, independence, and a sense of belonging. She found classmates who shared her love for cars and said the program brought out her best. Although auto collision remains a male-dominated field, she said that reality never discouraged her. “Being a female in this industry does not stop me from what I want to do,” Cortez said. “If anything, it makes me even more eager to get into this business because I want people to look at me and say, ‘Wow, she can really do it.’”

Her dedication stood out to instructors and leadership alike. At Whittier’s CTI grant announcement event, Lynch introduced her as the student speaker and shared how proud the school was of her accomplishments. Cortez described how CTI helped her find direction, deepen her skills, and take her first steps into the industry.

One of her proudest moments came on the last morning of the program when she told DeBenedictis she had been hired by Marshall’s Autobody Experts in Billerica. She recalled how he pointed at her and said she had just secured her career. “I could have never felt more rewarded,” she said.

Cortez hopes to continue building her skills, pursue college, and possibly study business. She is also considering returning to Whittier in the future as an instructor, which she said would be a meaningful way to help others and give back to the program that shaped her future.

Lynch said CTI graduation represents a new beginning not just for students, but for the region’s workforce. “Every CTI graduate strengthens our local economy,” she said. “These programs give residents real opportunities and give employers the talent they need to grow.”

Looking around the auto collision shop with its tools, lifted cars, and half-finished projects, Cortez said CTI gave her a true foundation. She said she is excited for what comes next, and as she steps out of the shop, steel-toed boots tapping against the concrete floor, her future feels unmistakably within reach.

OUTCOMES & **IMPACT**



CTI culinary arts students at Whittier Tech.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The progress and success of CTI programs are evaluated using four key performance metrics: (1) enrollment, (2) credential attainment, (3) program completion, and (4) employment. Job placement rates for program completers are assessed three months after the close-out of each grant. This timeframe allows grantees to collect and verify employment data, fulfill documentation and data entry requirements, meet 30-day job retention benchmarks, and conduct participant follow-up activities.

Funding rounds one through five have been completed and formally closed. Rounds six through nine remain active, while programming for round ten is scheduled to begin in fall 2025. CommCorp will report placement outcomes for these rounds in future reports as data become available.

Across funding rounds one through five, CTI contracted with 11 vocational high schools across the Commonwealth. Of the 1,177 participants enrolled, 85% successfully completed their programs and earned industry-recognized credentials. Participants typically attained safety credentials such as OSHA 10/30,³ Hot Work Safety,⁴ or S/P2 Safety and Pollution Prevention,⁵ along with technical credentials including AWS 1G⁶ for welding, EPA 608⁷ for HVAC, or ASE Certification⁸ for automotive technology. This combination of high-quality training and industry-recognized credentials strengthens graduates' employability and provides a competitive edge in training-related occupations.

CTI program implementation began in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, with round one launching in October 2020. Round two was implemented during the pandemic and concluded in June 2022. Given this timing, job placements for graduates of these first two rounds occurred amid widespread business closures, layoffs, furloughs, and other significant disruptions in the labor market. To support graduates in securing employment during this period, CTI leveraged the MassHire workforce system to provide comprehensive job placement assistance. This included career readiness workshops, resume-writing support, job search tools, and guidance on potential co-enrollment in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs.

Despite the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic, CTI launched rounds one through five between October 2020 and November 2021. Graduates from rounds one through five achieved an 84%⁹ employment rate. Among those employed, 46% reported earning between \$20 and \$25 per hour, while 12% reported wages of \$25 per hour or higher. Across these five rounds, CTI grantees developed partnerships with 420 employers statewide, helping Massachusetts businesses fill critical workforce needs with newly trained and credentialed workers.

[3] OSHA 10/30: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training programs that provide 10 or 30 hours of instruction on workplace safety and health hazards.

[4] Hot Work Safety: Training focused on safety practices for tasks involving open flames, sparks, or heat production, such as welding or cutting.

[5] S/P2 Safety and Pollution Prevention: Industry-specific training on workplace safety and environmental practices, commonly used in automotive, construction, and other technical fields.

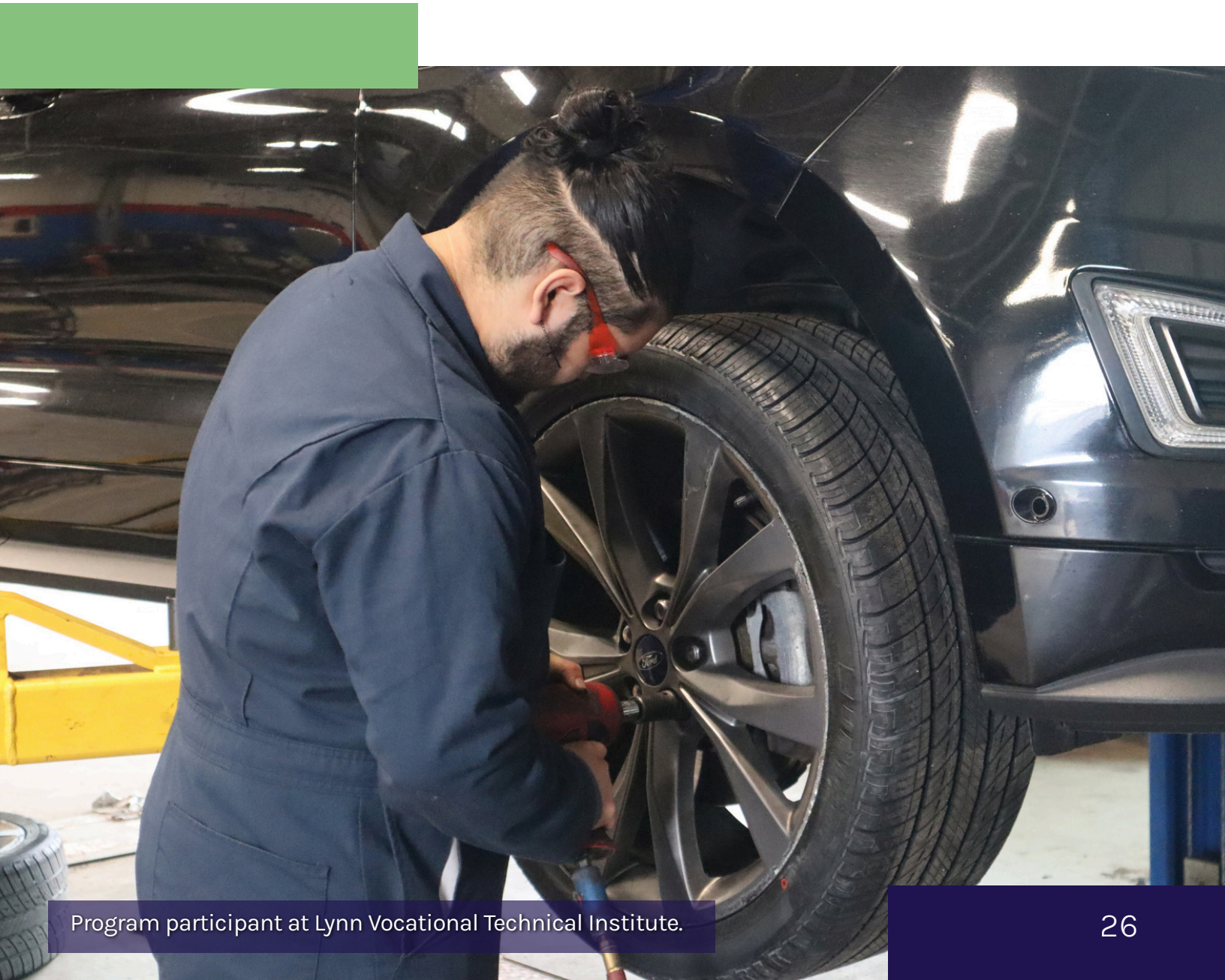
[6] AWS 1G: A certification from the American Welding Society (AWS) indicating proficiency in basic flat-position welding.

[7] EPA608: A certification from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required for HVAC technicians who handle refrigerants.

[8] ASE Certification: Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification demonstrates a technician's expertise in automotive repair and maintenance.

[9] Placement data is derived from a combination of grantee-reported post-training employment data and supplemented using a records matching process facilitated through a data-sharing agreement between Commonwealth Corporation and the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

DEMOGRAPHICS OF **CTI PARTICIPANTS**



DEMOGRAPHICS OF CTI PARTICIPANTS

The demographic data presented below provides a comprehensive snapshot of CTI participants during rounds one through nine, reflecting the program's continued reach and its focus on serving diverse populations across Massachusetts. These data points capture critical dimensions such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, education level, and employment status at the time of enrollment - illustrating the breadth of communities engaged in CTI training opportunities.

At the time of enrollment, CTI participants continue to represent a nearly balanced distribution between unemployed (47%) and underemployed (53%) individuals. Additionally, 68% of enrollees are classified as low-income,¹⁰ and 37% report receiving some form of public assistance. These figures highlight CTI's impact in expanding access to employment opportunities and promoting economic mobility for individuals with limited financial resources.

Educational attainment data further illustrates CTI's critical role in supporting foundational workforce development. The majority of participants (62%) report a high school diploma, HiSET, or GED as their highest level of education, while 20% have some postsecondary experience without earning a degree. Only 14% hold an associate degree or higher. This data underscores CTI's role as a key entry point for individuals with limited access to postsecondary education, helping them earn industry-recognized credentials and transition into high-demand career pathways.

The age profile of CTI participants shows nearly half (48%) of participants are between the ages of 17 and 24, while 52% are 25 or older, including 28% who are over the age of 35. The average participant age is 29, with a median age of 25. This breakdown highlights CTI's capacity to meet the needs of early-career job seekers as well as adults seeking reskilling or career transitions.

Among CTI's participant pool, White participants comprise 50% of the total, followed by Black or African American participants (19%), Asian participants (4%), and American Indian or Alaska Native participants (1%). Multiracial individuals account for 4%, while 11% either selected "Other" or declined to disclose their race. Nearly one-third (31%) identify as Hispanic or Latinx individuals. In addition, 23% of participants identify as immigrants, and 21% speak a language other than English as their primary language.

CTI continues to provide access to workforce training and credentialing opportunities, equipping participants from a broad spectrum of educational, economic, and cultural backgrounds with the skills and credentials necessary for sustainable employment in high-demand industries.

[10] Participants are considered low-income if their annual family income is below 200% of the poverty income level for the size of family and/or is receiving public assistance such as TAFDC, SNAP, EAEDC, SSI.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF CTI PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED

Age	Age 17-24 Years Old	48%
	Age 25-34 Years Old	23%
	Age 35-44 Years Old	15%
	Age 45-54 Years Old	9%
	Age 55+ Years Old	5%
	Average Age	29 yrs
	Median Age	25 yrs

Gender	Female	16%
	Male	82%
	Non-Binary/Other	1%
	Not Disclosed	1%

Race/Ethnicity Combined	American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
	Asian	4%
	Black or African American	19%
	White	50%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1%
	Multiracial	4%
	Other	11%
Not Disclosed or Missing	10%	

Other Characteristics	Persons with Disabilities	7%
	Immigrant	23%
	Veterans	3%
	Receiving Public Assistance	37%
	Low Income	68%
	UI Claimant/Exhaustee	11%
	Language not English	21%

Highest Level of Education	Less Than High School	4%
	High School Diploma/HiSET/GED	62%
	Some Postsecondary/College	20%
	Associate Degree	5%
	Bachelor Degree or Higher	9%

Employment Status at Enrollment	Unemployed	47%
	Under-employed	53%

Primary Language Spoken	English	82%
	Spanish	8%
	Haitian Creole	3%
	Portuguese	1%
	Arabic	1%

SUCCESS STORY



CTI participants at Franklin County Technical School are rebuilding their futures.

From Layoffs to New Careers: CTI Training at FCTS Helps Adults Rebuild Their Futures

In Western Massachusetts, Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) is proving that trade education isn't just about learning a skill; it's about changing lives. Through its partnership with the Career Technical Initiative (CTI), administered by Commonwealth Corporation, FCTS has become a beacon of opportunity for adults seeking a new career path. Two recent students, Zephyr Lorusso and Li-Ming Dolan, are evidence of that impact.



Participants celebrate completion at Franklin County Technical School.

“Franklin County Tech is an institution that is working hard to prepare folks of every generation for high-paying, blue-collar vocational jobs,” said Justin Lawrence, Adult Education Coordinator at FCTS. Serving urban centers and rural communities across three states, FCTS aims to reach a diverse population through hands-on, practical training.

That mission found new momentum in 2022, when FCTS became a CTI grantee during round 6 of the initiative. “That initial two years with the CTI grant gave us the opportunity to really springboard into what we’re doing now,” Lawrence explained. “The superintendent gave us a charge to make Franklin Tech a source of advancement for everyone in the county - not just our high school students.”



Zephyr Lorusso

CTI's support allowed the school to launch adult education programs and build strong community partnerships with organizations like MassHire and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. The focus is breaking down barriers to training and employment. "We've adopted some of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and approached each individual to make sure they have everything they need to be the best student they can be," Lawrence added. "It really helps them to find good jobs at the end of the day."

For student Zephyr Lorusso, CTI opened the door to a career she thought she had left behind. "I live in Bernardston, Massachusetts, and my apprenticeship is in Brattleboro, Vermont, at Westinghouse Electric Company," she said. Her division designs and builds remotely piloted robots that clean and maintain nuclear reactors – work requiring precision and ingenuity.

Before joining the program, Zephyr had been working as a software engineer. "I was laid off in 2023 due to shifts in the industry – especially with AI making jobs harder to find," she shared. After a short time in customer service and finance, she turned to Franklin County Tech. "I've always loved building things and seeing solutions come together. That's what drew me to electrical work."

The hands-on training made the difference. "The weekly labs helped reinforce wiring best practices, safety protocols, and confidence in working with electrical systems. I had some theoretical knowledge from college, but Franklin County gave me real-world training," Zephyr said.

CTI helped her build that bridge with confidence. "The staff, especially Justin, were incredibly supportive. CTI created the environment where I felt prepared and confident to apply." Now at Westinghouse, Zephyr sees this chapter as a return to something she loved years ago. "I was on the robotics team in high school. This role brought that passion back."



Li-Ming Dolan's experience shows another side of CTI's impact. She lives in Northampton and now works as an auto technician at Jaguar in Hartford. After spending most of her adult life as a restaurant server, she knew she needed a long-term plan. "There's no real career advancement, no retirement plan. I'm almost 40 and I need to start investing in my future," she said.

It all started with a simple goal: fix her teenager's used car. "I bought the car for \$1,500 and started fixing it myself. I was just looking for a basic class." That search led her to the CTI program at Franklin County Tech. "It was free, offered tools, and was way more in-depth than I expected. Plus, it fit my schedule since it was in the evenings."

What began as a hobby became a new career. "I applied to two places, got interviews at both, and received offers from both. I chose Jaguar." She's already seeing new doors open. "Jaguar is sending me to their training headquarters this fall or winter. That feels amazing – to have a big international company invest in me, especially as a woman in this field."

CTI's impact on her life is clear. "It gave me the tools and the confidence to pursue something new without huge financial risk. CTI gives people the opportunity to try a new path with real support. CTI turned me from a DIY mechanic to an actual Jaguar technician. That's amazing."

Stories like Zephyr's and Li-Ming's show just how transformative the partnership between Franklin County Technical School and CTI has been – not just for individuals, but for entire communities. As Lawrence puts it, "CTI does a wonderful job of removing barriers for participants. We're trying to help folks who qualify for the grant funding access the trainings and then continue to support them after they've graduated in finding employment."

With a focus on meeting each person's needs, staying connected to employer trends, and building programs that match the moment, the CTI model is working. "We are always providing the most up-to-date training for our students, making them the most attractive to employers," Lawrence said. And for students like Zephyr and Li-Ming, the impact is not just a job – it's a new beginning.






**We thank you for your
continued support.**



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