

Coachella Valley Economic Partnership Workforce Excellence: Collaborative Regional Leadership

Introduction

The Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) and regional civic leaders have made a long-term commitment to strengthening the economy of the Coachella Valley and have jointly authored the *Coachella Valley Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness* to advance student access to career and college as a key driver of regional economic success.

They have further focused on developing three industry clusters which hold great promise for high-wage, high-skilled jobs and economic growth. Specifically, these clusters are:

- Healthcare Life Sciences
- Creative Arts and Design
- Clean Technology and Energy

A smart, skilled workforce pipeline will be essential to growing these industry sectors. CVEP is partnering with the region's education and cluster-specific industry leadership to facilitate core regional strategies which are already addressing this need:

- Industry Council Development
- Academy and Pathway Support and Expansion
- Work-Based Learning Opportunities
- Scholarships and College Support: Pathways to Success

Education is Economic Development: An Integrated Jobs/Workforce Model

CVEP launched the Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) in February of 2005, in partnership with the Riverside County EDA/Workforce Investment Board and the James Irvine Foundation, for the purpose of developing seamless K-University education pathways designed with industry voice, to prepare valley students for high-wage, high-growth careers in three industry sectors targeted for local development: Healthcare & Life Sciences; Arts, Media & Entertainment and Advanced Technology.

Since the inception of this work and ongoing to present day, CVUSD, DSUSD, PSUSD, College of the Desert, CSUSB, UCR and the Riverside County Office of Education have aligned their programs and significant budget resources to support this regional emphasis on pathway development.

The overarching purpose of this work is to assure that all students are empowered to take ownership of their learning and obtain the knowledge to be successful in post-secondary education, work and life.

CVEP Workforce Excellence: Progress Timeline

2004

- UCR refers James Irvine Foundation to Terry Green as CVEP Business/Education committee Chair and CVEP secures planning grant. College of the Desert, UCR, CSUSB PD and K 12 representatives all participate in original project planning.

2005

- James Irvine Foundation awards program grant, authored by Kay Hazen and Terry Green, to launch the Career Pathways Initiative
- Riverside County Economic Development Agency/ Workforce Investment Board is first program partner

2006

- PSUSD Board Member, Justin Blake, introduces Ford Motor Company Fund to CVEP and regional education and civic leadership
- Ford Motor Company Fund names CVEP Career Pathways a national best practice and designates region one of first three Ford PAS NGL (Partnership for Advanced Studies Next Generation Learning) Communities in the country

2007

- Desert Healthcare District becomes a key program partner investing grant support to sustain and build capacity of CVEP's Healthcare Industry Council.

2008

- CVEP's Healthcare Industry Council pilots the state's first Cal PASS PLC (Professional Learning Council) in Health Careers, establishing a framework for data collection, local analysis and local solution development so that students successfully transition from every segment of education, K University and, ultimately, into the healthcare workforce.

Working Backward from Industry Need

CVEP's Workforce Excellence programs (formerly Career Pathways and Pathways to Success) have been designed to prepare valley students for the region's emerging workforce by working backward from industry needs. These efforts:

- Create opportunities to link student and faculty learning to the world of work
- Connect students, teachers, industry partners and scholarship support on a regional level
- Support regional alignment of education pathway programs with economic and workforce development targets

Three industry councils aligned with CVEP's target clusters, convene regularly to assure that valley students are prepared to be successful in jobs of the future. These councils:

- Examine labor market data
- Examine audits of existing education programs
- Gather feedback from industry partners
- Participate in advanced labor market studies
- Support the productive work of career academies in CVUSD, DSUSD and PSUSD
- Bring mentoring, advanced internships, links to key professionals in business and support for grants and funding across the entire spectrum
- Facilitate discussions about student progress along the pipeline
- Integrate pipeline workforce efforts with regional issues, i.e. academy and scholarship students serve in research capacity for the CV Healthcare Initiative and CCHS HEAL Academy students host an annual Salton Sea Summit

Increasing Access to Post-Secondary Study and Internships

Understanding that a majority of valley students lack the financial resources to access and complete college, a sophisticated regional scholarship, student support and mentor network has been established to support valley students to and through college with a long-term funding commitment from College Access Foundation. Over ten years, this partnership has the potential to bring \$10 million in foundation resources and an additional \$5 million in local match to provide scholarship and student support services to valley youth.

Completing the circle, pathways students are connected to the community through relationships with business mentors, so that they see career opportunities available to them here in the valley.

2009

- College Access Foundation of CA selects the Coachella Valley as their first place based scholarship initiative in CA and the *Pathways to Success* (PTS) regional scholarship and student support program is launched.
- COD partners with CVEP to provide leadership for the Advanced Technology Industry Council.
- CVEP Career Pathways designated a Ford PAS NGL National Hub by the Ford Motor Company Fund.

2010

- CVEP merges CPI and PTS as Workforce Excellence.
- Education partners represented on CVEP governing board.
- Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) commits annual resources to advance Workforce Excellence efforts.
- CVEP collaborates with Health Career Connection to provide paid summer internships for local college students.

2011

- CVEP Workforce Excellence Oversight Committee launches development of 5 year regional plan with technical assistance from Ford NGL.

2012

- CVEP launches integrated Jobs Workforce Model to advance regional economic/workforce development.
- James Irvine Foundation awards grant to advance regional pipeline work.

Key Accomplishments:

- \$12 million in new revenue secured from outside funders to support Workforce Excellence.
- Three (3) Industry Councils formed and 400 business & education partners are actively engaged.
- 60 new industry sites secured for work based learning during 2012.
- \$6.26 million in scholarships awarded to Coachella Valley students.
- CVEP piloted the state's first Cal PASS Professional Learning Council (PLC) in Health Careers.
- The Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness is completed and formally adopted by CVUSD, DSUSD, PSUSD and COD boards.