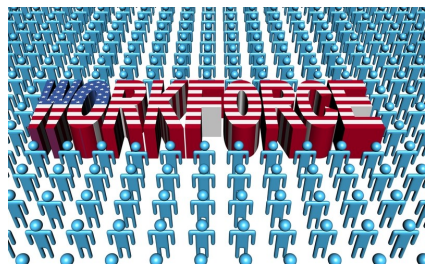


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ALERT: WORKFORCE WEDNESDAYS

The 40+ organizations (including CAAL) that make up the [Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce](#) (CIAW) are asking professionals at all levels to reach out to members of Congress on the high importance of adult education and workforce development to the nation's economic recovery. CIAW, a collaborative effort coordinated by the National Skills Coalition, calls for a program of "Workforce Wednesdays" in August 2012, in which the constituents of every member organization press their House and Senate elected officials to protect federal adult education and workforce development funding, which is already inadequate.

Members of Congress are in their home districts this month. CIAW urges you and your colleagues to take action in any number of ways--for example, by arranging in-district meetings or site visits with your senators and representatives, by phone calls to let your representatives know where you stand on the issues, or by alerting your local community through op-ed pieces or letters to the editor of your local paper. These and other helpful ideas for action can take as little as one minute of your time or an hour or more (see CIAW tab [What You Can Do - Take Action](#)). Other information about CIAW's ongoing activities are also posted at the website, along with resources that will be helpful in this "Workforce Wednesday" campaign and other initiatives you might undertake.

The goal in the "Workforce Wednesday" campaign is to have policymakers hear directly from their constituents about why investments in workforce development programs, including adult education, are important and how these investments impact their local communities.



OTHER LEADING EDGE NEWS

▶ **McGraw-Hill Education** of The McGraw-Hill Companies is working to develop the **Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TSAC)** as a new Common Core aligned assessment to be used as an alternative high school equivalency exam. McGraw-Hill is working with a consortia of 25 states, and plans to pilot the assessment in the fall of 2012 in New York State. The TASC will cover Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies content through Grade 14 to allow for placement and transition to postsecondary programs. For more information, email mhcontemporary@mcgraw-hill.com. In addition, McGraw-Hill has issued a new **Common Core State Standards** publication in its adult education series. The 25-page discussion paper draws on research findings in the field and conducted interviews to consider the effect that the common core standards could have on adult education and high school equivalency. The authors are Jeffrey Fantine, former Director of Adult Education and Family Literacy in Maine, and Mitch Rosin, director of Adult Learning and Workforce Initiatives at McGraw-Hill Education.

▶ **The New York Times** has just issued **The Times in Plain English**. Readers of the Times are mostly college graduates. This new initiative is designed to reach lower level readers or "basic readers" as well. It presents major news stories without using any complex or compound sentences, and uses no metaphors, similes, or analogies. It avoids slang and idiomatic words, contractions, and adjectives, and adopts other standards to make material easier and more readable. Each story is short and to the point. Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level readability formulas are used to check language levels. The design is simple and inviting. The online newspaper is available at no cost and may be reproduced and distributed by teachers, students, and other adults at will. It is available internationally, and with a simple click of the mouse the text is instantly converted to another language of choice.

▶ **Get Ready...Get Set...GET TO WORK** is the name of a new **Sundance Channel** series that premieres on August 13th (10:30 pm EST). A sneak-peak is available at www.sundancechannel.com/watch-get-to-work. The series is built around the work of **STRIVE**, a unique job training program designed to reach at-risk and chronically unemployed adults, with a focus on living-wage employment and social reintegration. STRIVE works through outreach teams that go into the community to find potential students and lift them up to readiness for and placement in jobs. Students are drawn from churches, prisons, drug recovery centers, services for unwed mothers, youth services, and other community settings. STRIVE specialists interview potential students, determine their eligibility to participate in the organization's training programs, and offer education programs and job placement services. The program began in New York City in 1984 and has expanded to 21 programs across the U.S. and additional sites in the U.K. and Israel.

STRIVE's Executive Director, Philip Weinberg, formerly served as president of the New York City Workforce Investment Board. According to website data, nearly 50,000 individuals have been served in the STRIVE program so far. STRIVE recently received a Wal-Mart Foundation grant of \$620,000 to extend its services to unemployed persons in Boston, New York City, and Washington, D.C.

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