

# Community College Workforce Development By The Numbers

620,000

Community college students  
earn career & technical  
certificates annually

1/2

Of post-secondary  
certificates are awarded  
by community  
colleges

30%

Increase in  
community college  
workforce programs  
since 2010

\$6.80

Return on each  
tax dollar invested  
in community  
college

\$7K

Average salary boost to  
graduates with a  
technical certificate  
or degree

1,800,000

Students currently enrolled in community college  
workforce development programs

Sources:  
U.S. Department of Education  
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce  
American Association of Community Colleges  
U.S. Department of Education, NCES  
American Association of Community Colleges

## Community Colleges Build Pipelines to Local Industries

Approximately **1.8 million community college students** are enrolled in non-degree programs like apprenticeships, certifications, or industry-recognized credentials to enter the workforce directly. **75% are age 25 or older**, highlighting the vital role community colleges play in **retraining and upskilling** older workers for modern, in-demand careers, especially in health care, IT, and manufacturing.

During the pandemic, Laredo College launched Laredo CARES, an initiative to create **accelerated training programs** in 18 vocational fields. This program was a collaboration with the City of Laredo and Workforce Solutions for South Texas. It was designed to help individuals, like Christina Cepeda, who were impacted by layoffs, furloughs, or underemployment because of COVID-19. The program has trained nearly **1,800 people**, with a goal of creating more than **700 jobs** annually.

Community colleges award roughly **50% of all post-secondary certificates** in the country. Campuses work closely with local industries to create **college-to-career pipelines**. Short-term industry focused programs allow students like Christina to reskill quickly and **secure employment for little to no cost**. The number of **workforce development programs** at community colleges throughout the U.S. has **increased by 30 percent** since 2010.

Sources:  
American Association of Community Colleges  
Opportunity America  
Laredo College  
U.S. Department of Education, NCES