# Transforming the Nation's Credentialing System

## 2023 Network Conference
### *Incremental Credentialing: Exploring the Questions*

September 20 & 21, 2023
2:00 – 5:00 PM ET

**CREDENTIAL AS YOU GO**

# Conference Program

Credential As You Go works to transform the U.S. degree-centric system into a nationally recognized, equity-focused incremental credentialing system (noncredit/credit, cross-disciplinary, undergraduate/graduate). Incremental credentials enable individuals to be recognized for what they know and can do *as* they acquire learning.

Work focuses in ten areas: 1) increasing the availability of incremental credentials for learners, 2) national campaign to raise awareness of the value of incremental credentials, 3) research on the feasibility and learner outcomes in an incremental credentialing system, 4) support services, 5) professional development through tools and resources, 6) ensuring equity, 7) policy and practice reforms, 8) technology that supports incremental credentialing, 9) quality and trust, and 10) building connections with related initiatives across the learn-and-work ecosystem.

In its fifth year, the national initiative currently works with 54 entities including eight higher education systems, 44 institutions and two credentialing organizations; co-founded the affiliated Learn & Work Ecosystem Library; and is guided by a National Advisory Board of more than 130 higher education experts, industry leaders, and influencers.

The initiative is led by a partnership among the Center for Leadership in Credentialing Learning, SUNY Empire State University; Program on Skills, Credentials & Workforce Policy, George Washington University; and Corporation for a Skilled Workforce.

The 2023 Network conference highlights the work of Network members—addressing questions related to the development, implementation, and delivery of incremental credentials.

# Two-Day Agenda

## Brief descriptions followed by session details

| DAY | TIME | PLENARY | BREAKOUT 1 | BREAKOUT 2 | BREAKOUT 3 | BREAKOUT 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| September 20 | 2:00 PM ET | **Welcome** | | | | |
| | 2:05 PM ET | **Leadership Panel:** Moderated by Michelle Lair, North Carolina Community College System<br><br>**Funder Panel:** Lumina Foundation, Walmart, the Institute for Educational Sciences | | | | |
| | 2:40 PM ET | **Learner Panel:** Moderated by Marc Goldberg<br><br>Student representatives from Purdue Global University, Cleveland State University, SUNY Mohawk Valley Community College | | | | |
| | 3:30 PM ET | | Colorado's Quality and In-demand Non-degree Credential Evaluation Framework, Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado Workforce Development Council | Early Childhood Education Pathway, Red Rocks Community College | Leveraging Lightcast and Aligning Credentials with Industry, Bryan University | |
| | 4:00 PM ET | **Break** | | | | |
| | 4:10 PM ET | | Career Launchpad, Metropolitan State University of Denver | Incremental Credentialing in Healthcare, National Healthcareer Association | Digital Credentialing Strategies, Purdue University Global | Braiding Funding and Learner Navigation, SUNY Schenectady Community College |
| | 4:40 PM ET | **1. Feedback Activity**<br><br>**2. Showcasing New Tools & Resources** | | | | |
| | 5:00 PM ET | **Adjourn** | | | | |
| September 21 | 2:00 PM ET | **Milestones & Lessons Learned from our Network** | | | | |
| | 2:45 PM ET | | Stacking from Non-Credit to Masters, Louisiana State University Online & Continuing Education | Stackable Credential Pathways, Colorado Department of Higher Education | Fast Track Career Initiative, Mohawk Valley Community College | |
| | 3:15 PM ET | **Transition time** | | | | |

| | | Creating an Incremental Credentialing Process, SUNY Rockland Community College | Meta Social Media Marketing Professional Certificate, Bay Path University | University-Wide Digital Badging Initiative, Florida Gulf Coast University | Cross-State Meeting (Invitational) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3:20 PM ET | | | | | |
| 3:50 PM ET | Break | | | | |
| 4:00 PM ET | Lightning Talks | | | | |
| 4:45 PM ET | Feedback Activity & Closing | | | | |
| 5:00 PM ET | Adjourn | | | | |

## Plenary Sessions

### September 20, 2:05 – 3:30 PM ET

**Leadership Panel**

Michelle Lair, Director of Academic Programs, North Carolina Community College System and member of the North Carolina State Leadership Group for Credential As You Go will moderate a discussion among members of the Credential As You Go Leadership Team. Panelists will discuss what they believe to be some of the pivotal questions in the incremental credentialing ecosystem.

- Melissa Goldberg, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, Credential As You Go Co-Lead
- Kirk Knestis, Principal Evaluand LLC, Credential As You Go Researcher
- Nan Travers, SUNY Empire State University, Credential As You Go Co-Lead
- Holly Zanville, George Washington University, Credential As You Go Co-Lead

**Funder Panel**

Michelle Lair, Director of Academic Programs, North Carolina Community College System and member of the North Carolina State Leadership group for Credential As You Go will moderate a discussion among funders of Credential As You Go, past and present. Panelists will answer the following questions: Why are you (or did you) fund Credential As You Go? Why is this topic important as an investment of change?

- Chauncy Lennon, Vice President for Learning and Work and Senior Strategy Advisor at Lumina Foundation
- James Benson, Research Analyst-Postsecondary Education, National Center for Education Research, Institute for Education Science, U.S. Department of Education
- Shannon Rowan, Senior Manager II in the Opportunity area at Walmart

**Learner Panel**

Marc Goldberg, Principal, Skills Strategy Consulting leads a discussion with students who have engaged in various incremental credential opportunities across the country. Hear about student experiences in their own voice and what worked and did not work well for them.

- Keirstin Blair, Purdue Global University
- Precious Johnson, Cleveland State University
- Monica Robinson, SUNY Mohawk Valley Community College

## September 20, 3:30 – 4:00 PM ET

**Ruthanne Orihuela, Colorado Department of Higher Education**
**Renise Walker, Colorado Workforce Development Council**
### Colorado's Quality and In-demand Non-degree Credential Evaluation Framework
In this session, participants will hear about the process to develop a statewide definition of and evaluation framework for quality, in-demand non-degree credentials. The collaborative process engaged a comprehensive group of stakeholders, and the end product (out this month) is an important first step toward greater coherence across K12, postsecondary, and workforce when considering credentials of value.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What criteria should be considered when determining whether a non-degree credential qualifies as quality and in-demand?
- What is the value of a statewide non-degree credential framework?
- Who should determine what quality is?

**Janiece Kneppe, Red Rocks Community College (RRCC)**
### Early Childhood Education Pathway
Red Rocks Community College's Early Childhood Education program is developing a competency-based education pathway for early childhood apprentices to earn 6-, 12-, 18-, and 30-credit hour stacking certificates through their apprenticeship experiences and training on-the-job. These certificates align with workforce qualification requirements in Colorado and lead to either an AA transfer degree or terminal AAS degree in ECE. This session will share challenges and next steps.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- How are you providing opportunities for learners to demonstrate what they've learned to parlay that into alternatives for traditional course learning requirements?
- How are you raising awareness and building support for incremental credentialing and competency-based education (CBE) beyond the disciplines that have moved early into these types of innovations?

**Jennifer Newmann and Marjorie Rosen, Bryan University**
### Leveraging Lightcast and Aligning Credentials with Industry
The university has built stacked credentials and aligned with job skills to provide students with a strong, incremental pathway to their chosen career. Designed verticals of related programs assist students to move incrementally from a certificate to associates to bachelor's without losing credits. Industry-recognized certifications are a hallmark of all our certifications and embedded in each program as a third-party validation and to provide students with additional credentials to boost career prospects. During initial program design, we leveraged Lightcast to identify necessary skills for employment, and sought input from program advisory committees comprised of industry practitioners. This session will describe an approach to incremental credentials aligned with industry, providing skill-based paths.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- How are incremental credentials developed and resources maximized to ensure quality, meet program approval requirements, and build curriculum in tandem with current programs.
- How is information about new credentials disseminated to students, academic advisors, and employers about the new credential options?
- How can data be used to inform decision making?
- How are incremental credentials aligned with employer needs?

# September 20, 4:10 – 4:40 PM ET

**Terry Bower, Metropolitan State University Denver**
## Career Launchpad
To provide more educational on- and off-ramps for students, Innovative & Lifelong Learning (I&LL) created a stackable credential program called Career Launchpad, which seamlessly stacks non-credit courses to a credit course, across a wide range of industries, which then lead to multiple educational and career pathways. This session will describe Career Launchpad.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- How was this initiative conceived and implemented?
- How has it worked?
- What barriers have you run into and how are you addressing them?

**Jessica Langley-Loep, National Healthcareer Association (NHA)**
## Incremental Credentialing in Healthcare
There is a strong focus on skills-based education and training across healthcare; however, that learning is often not obtained within a traditional classroom. The current healthcare workforce crisis creates the imperative accelerate the learning journey and enter practice faster. Approaches include bridging the gap between formal learning and skills training through credit for prior learning, dual credit enrollment, and/or working with the American Council on Education (ACE helps adults gain access to academic credit for formal courses and examinations taken outside the traditional classroom). NHA has partnered with ACE to gain approval for academic credit for certain industry-recognized credentials which helps learners and professionals advance within their careers. This session will explain the ACE approval process and how NHA is one of the only credentialing organizations implementing this across the country.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What is the need and value that industry- recognized credentials bring to healthcare?
- How does credentialing help accelerate learning to achieve job readiness?
- How is ACE credit implemented and used by health science learners and healthcare professionals?

**Jacob Askroth, Purdue University Global**
## Digital Credentialing Strategies
Purdue Global issues thousands of digital badges every month for a variety of use cases: credit and non-credit micro-credentials, academic success, student involvement, and faculty/staff service and training, among others.  Purdue University Global has tested many digital credentialing initiatives and strategies along the way to increase earner engagement, make credentials of value to potential students, and look for ways to continue to improve and expand.  This session will describe a timeline and basic rationale for making various digital credentialing decisions, what has worked well and hasn't, and plans for the future.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What are some strategic initiatives and methods that can help move the needle in terms of issuing digital credentials?
- What are some initiatives and methods that can help move the needle in terms of increasing learner engagement?
- What are some methods for building internal awareness of and support for digital credentialing efforts?

**Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, Schenectady County Community College**
## Braiding Funding and Learner Navigation
Most students have little knowledge of the services, funding streams, and general supports available to them and even less about how to navigate this access. However, it is in the student's best interest to have access to a variety of "no harm" funds or no cost/low-cost options. Coupled with this is the reality that "as of March 2023, about forty-four million U.S. borrowers collectively owed more than $1.6 trillion in federal student loans. Additional private loans bring that total to above $1.7 trillion, surpassing auto loans and credit card debt. Only home mortgage debt, at about $12 trillion, is larger." These are staggering

statistics and I know that we can do better for our students. We will discuss methods by which funds can be braided together and the navigation required to accomplish this.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What strategies can be employed to help underserved students navigate funding available for incremental credentials?
- What funding options are available to support incremental credentials?

**Plenary Sessions**

## September 20, 4:40 – 5:00 PM ET

**Feedback Activity &**

**Showcasing New Tools & Resources**

Credential As You Go has been expanding tools & resources for everyone's use.  This session will highlight the newest tools & resources and provide an overview of future ones on the horizon.

**Plenary Sessions**

## September 21, 2:00 – 2:45 PM ET

**Milestones and Lessons Learned from our Network**

Over the last two years, Credential As You Go has been meeting with the 2022 & 2023 cohorts. This session highlights what we have been learning from members of the Network on what helps incremental credentialing processes move forward or slow it down, and general lessons learned.

**Breakout Sessions**

## September 21, 2:45 – 3:15 PM ET

**Lynn Nahmens and Radhika Krishnadas, Louisiana State University Online & Continuing Education**
**Stacking from Non-Credit to Masters**
LSU Online & Continuing Education, in partnership with LSU's Department of Construction Management, created and implemented a stackable strategy to meet industry and student needs. The learner pathway stacks from non-credit microcredentials to a Master's degree. The design of the stackables was informed by close consultation with local and national construction industry advisory council members. This session will describe the learner stacks and processes.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- How are incremental credentials aligned with employer needs?
- How is prior learning assessment employed to create opportunities for learners to move from alternative credentials to degree pathways?
- How can curricula be designed to address critical career skills?

**Allana Farley, Emily Millican, Madelyn Oaks, Colorado Department of Higher Education**

**Stackable Credential Pathways in Five Industries**

Colorado Senate Bill 22-192 calls for the Colorado Department of Higher Education, in consultation with state institutions of higher education and a business organization or industry representative, to develop and implement a process that encourages institutions to identify incremental achievements on the path to degree completion, organize stackable credentials, and identify how credentials may be evaluated and then may become stacked into "stackable credential pathways" to provide increased access to employment and may result in a degree. This session will describe how the CDHE is facilitating the creation of stackable credential pathways in five growing industries (Behavioral Health, Cybersecurity, Education, Healthcare, Software Development) by January 1, 2025.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- How is work-based learning or work experience applied for credit to an education pathway, specifically related to a certificate or degree?
- How can we support workers who are non-credentialed in earning certificates or other non-degree credentials and in pursuing a career/education pathway that leads to a living wage? (i.e. Caregivers, Paraprofessionals)
- How can we communicate with multiple stakeholders about stackable credential pathways and emphasize the importance of competency-based education and hiring?

**Tim Thomas, Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC)**

**Fast Track Career Initiative**

Discriminatory degree legacy systems and systems lacking equity measures has resulted in many students falling through the cracks, never truly reaping the benefits of receiving an education. MVCC devised the Fast Track Career initiative—a restorative action to reconnect neglected populations to outcomes they were promised through intentionally designed program structures that provide individuals with momentum points of success and incremental credentialing opportunities in extended career pathways. MVCC launched the Fast Track Career initiative mid-November 2022 and with community-based, user-designed outreach, has engaged over six hundred individuals in Fast Track curricula since onset. This session will provide an overview of the tenants of Fast Track and highlight illustrative cases.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What mechanisms can college's implement to maximize incremental credentials efficacy to advance students' social mobility?
- How can credit and non-credit experiences be combined to best meet the needs of learner populations?

# September 21, 3:20 – 3:50 PM ET

**Doreen Zarcone, Rockland Community College**

**Creating an Incremental Credentialing Process**

Incremental credential discussions began with approving a microcredential process. This session will describe the steps taken to create the inclusive processes, campus conversations that expanded stackability, various on-ramp points for students, and credit for prior learning opportunities. Several of the developed pathways will be shared.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What is the process to approve microcredentials?
- How did you work with your faculty to get their commitment?
- How did you identify the stackability aspect to create pathways?
- How did you develop the on-campus infrastructure to handle these changes?

**Megan Piccus, Bay Path University**

### Meta Social Media Marketing Professional Certificate

The University's strategic plan emphasizes incremental credentialing to focus on low-income adult learners, who will be prepared with industry-relevant competencies. Work has defined employment-education paths that integrate learning with work opportunities, and offer alternative learn-earn pathways that allow fluid entry and exit, partnered with industry-relevant competencies and career-education work opportunities, with the aim for upward social mobility and professional growth for the learner. This session will describe the learn-earn model's evolution with the launch of a Meta Social Media Marketing professional certificate into a "Social Media for Business" course, highlighting how the certificate was implemented and lessons learned.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- What is the value proposition to the learner? Would learners embrace the both/and option? Is the credential backed by industry?
- How can colleges connect a formally recognized credential to an academic program?
- Can we integrate the learning into our LMS (Canvas) where it can live alongside other curriculum?  Can we mark enrollment and completion of the credential in our SIS (Jenzabar)?

**Glenn Whitehouse, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)**

### University-Wide Digital Badging Initiative

FGCU has created three categories of digital badges: *Industry Specific*, which focuses on skills, knowledge, and abilities for specific employers; *Transferrable Skills*, based on NACE career readiness competencies; *and Continuing Education*, which focuses on upskilling and reskilling for professionals in the community that are typically not directly related to the university. This session will share practical strategies for designing and implementing a university-wide digital badging initiative, discuss how universities can partner with employers to create digital badges that close the "skills gaps" in local industries, and the value of microcredentials to universities, students, and employers.

Incremental Credentialing Questions:

- How can institutions create meaningful micro-credential programs?
- How can institutions engage employers in the development of digital badge programs?
- How can we communicate with multiple stakeholders about stackable credential pathways and emphasize the importance of competency-based education and hiring?

## Plenary Sessions

## September 21, 4:00 – 4:45 PM ET

# Lightning Talks

### Allana Farley, Colorado Department of Education (CDHE)

CDHE has created a task force to develop a new General Education Credential. The task force will identify best practices in this growing area of attention nationwide (credentialing general education) and look at competencies to begin developing digital credentials. This will allow students to articulate their skills and competencies to employers. The CHE will look at outcomes on the benefits to students in success and completion rates.

### Ashley Babcock, The College of Westchester

The College of Westchester has implemented a process for identifying embedded credentials within programs and, from them, developing non-credit, self-paced credentials for non-matriculated students. This lightening talk will focus on the college's three-step process and advice about how to successfully use each step: 1) identify embedded credentials; 2) assess length, delivery method, and best package for the credentials; 3) create and market the new credential and/or stacks of credentials.

**Angela Westmoreland, Fayetteville Technical Community College**
A.I. is being promoted and used in many areas all over the world. Did you know Artificial Intelligence, specifically ChatGPT, can be applied to the creation of incremental credentials? At FTCC, we are capitalizing on the benefits of ChatGPT in the planning stages of our programs. The unique, conversational structure of ChatGPT enables the user to generate, modify, and enhance input. We are using prompt language within ChatGPT to support the development of our incremental credentials and earner pathways. We are also utilizing ChatGPT to help us develop innovative evaluation plans and methods within those pathways to ensure assessments are rigorous for students and relevant to current industry standards.

**Annette Kariko and Wendy Creasy, East Carolina University**
Creating Microcredentials at Our University- How we established a process to ensure high quality Microcredentials for our community and students.

**Kiko Suarez, Huntington Junior College**
Before acquiring Huntington Junior College (HJC), the nonprofit organization (Certell) was already teaching a  successful noncredit civics education program in prisons (http://bendingbars.org).Through a reorganization of AAS programs, HJC saw an opportunity to align the prison program concepts to some of the Gen Ed requirements. They created a 16-quarter-credit bundle of college-level courses called "Civics Certificate", now embedded in all AAS degrees. It has been a virtuous learning cycle: a noncredit offering in prisons inspired a credit offering for the general populations.

**Kelvin Bentley, University of Texas System**
This presentation will provide an overview of The Texas Credentials for the Future initiative that is supporting University of Texas campuses in their efforts to improve the career readiness of undergraduate students by providing them access to industry-recognized microcredentials in academic courses and experiences.

**Plenary Sessions**

## September 21, 4:45 – 5:00 PM ET

**Closing & Feedback Activity**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Credential As You Go website: Home - Credential As You Go

Learn & Work Ecosystem Library: Learn & Work Ecosystem Library (learnworkecosystemlibrary.com)

YouTube: Credential As You Go - YouTube

Credential As You Go LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/credential-as-you-go/

Newsletter: Newsletter - Credential As You Go

Credential As You Go Playbooks: Tools and Resources - Credential As You Go

# Credential As You Go extends a huge
# Thank You to our Network!

**CAYG Network: State Systems, Institutions & Organizations**

1. American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)
2. Appalachian State University
3. Bay Path University
4. Bryan University
5. Caldwell Community College
6. Central Christian College of Kansas
7. City University of New York (CUNY)
8. Cleveland State University
9. Colorado Department of Higher Education
10. Colorado Mountain College
11. Colorado School of Mines
12. Colorado State University Global Campus
13. Colorado State University, Fort Collins
14. Colorado State University, Pueblo
15. Credit for Prior Learning Assessment Network (C-Plan), Minnesota State Colleges & Universities
16. D'Youville University
17. East Carolina University
18. Elon University
19. Fayetteville Technical Community College
20. Florida Gulf Coast University
21. Harford Community College
22. Houston Community College
23. Huntington Junior College
24. Kennesaw State University
25. Louisiana State University (LSU) Online & Continuing Education
26. Metropolitan State University of Denver
27. Miami University Regionals
28. Minneapolis College
29. Montgomery County Community College
30. National Writing Project
31. North Carolina Community College System
32. Pitt Community College
33. Purdue University Global
34. Red Rocks Community College
35. State University of New York System (SUNY)
36. Suny – University at Albany
37. Suny – University at Buffalo
38. Suny Empire State University
39. Suny Mohawk Valley Community College
40. Suny Onondaga Community College
41. Suny Rockland Community College
42. Suny Schenectady Community College
43. Suny Ulster Community College
44. Suny Westchester Community College
45. The College of Westchester
46. Unity College
47. University of Hawaii System
48. University of Missouri – St. Louis
49. University of North Carolina at Pembroke
50. University of North Carolina System
51. University of Texas System
52. University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
53. Wake Technical Community College
54. Western Colorado Community College