



**Address at the CareerSource Apprenticeship Summit
“Building Florida’s Talent Pipeline through Apprenticeships”**

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on June 20, 2018**





This speech was presented by President Rosenberg on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 to the attendees of the day two portion of CareerSource's Apprenticeship Summit - "Building Florida's Talent Pipeline through Apprenticeships".

Thank you, so much, CEO Michelle Dennard and Rick Beasley. It's an honor to be a part of Florida's *first* Apprenticeship Summit, "Building Florida's Talent Pipeline through Apprenticeships". Thank you for inviting me to be the keynote speaker this morning.

Welcome to FIU. We have a lot to be proud of:

- Forbes Magazine for two years in a row
- Has Named FIU as the second best large employer in Florida – right behind Publix
- Also identified us as the 34 best large employer in the country.

I have a lot on my mind – so let me get to the four takeaways: (1) Given the accelerating pace of change, there is a growing convergence between career and technical education and baccalaureate education. (2) The education process will be increasingly focused on learners, not students. Learning will be life-long as a consequence of exponential growth of knowledge. (3) Competency based learning will emerge to replace baccalaureate education as learning and earning programs, such as apprenticeships, take on greater importance in workforce training and retraining. (4) Florida needs to find ways to incentivize deeper collaboration and partnerships between educational institutions and the private sector.

Given the accelerating pace of change, there is a growing convergence between career and technical education and baccalaureate education. For too long, there has been a perceived fork in the road to employment. One path leads to vocational education and blue-collar work. And the other toward a four-year university degree and a white-collar career. But a convergence is taking place as we speak: will be learner centric and just-in-time centric. Convergence will allow more intentional merger of critical thinking and "vocational" skills for the traditional learner and for just in time skills sets for the non-traditional learner. Accelerated rate of technological and social change requires learners to be less focused on subject knowledge and more solutions-centric.

The education process will be increasingly focused on learners, not students. Learning will be life-long as a consequence of exponential growth of knowledge. As intelligent machines replace humans, the latter will need new and ever powerful more competencies that are evolving with artificial intelligence and big data. At a recent graduation, I noticed that a happy graduating student had written on her cap:

“Can I be excused for life?” Meaning, no more classes ever! Well this student may not want a four year education, but she will most certainly need to find a way to keep up with the knowledge in her field! As influential sociologist and futurist Alvin Toffler has stated: *“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn”*.

Competency based learning will emerge to replace baccalaureate education as learning and earning programs, such as apprenticeships, take on greater importance in workforce training and retraining. The future that I see? Intrusive cognitive measure of knowledge and learning. Automated matching of interests, capabilities and opportunities with job openings and/or gigs. Personalized variable education pathways – traditional learners, just-in-time learners, do it yourselfers, and a full range of learning and earning opportunities – internships to apprenticeships.

We’re all here today because we know the challenges that are out there now and the future of work is uncertain to say the least. The skills gap is real today! A McKinsey survey of young people and employers in nine countries found that **40 percent** of employers cited lack of skills as the main reason for entry-level job vacancies.

The McKinsey report on Education to Employment, found that at 60 percent of young people said that on-the-job training and hands-on learning are the most effective instructional techniques, but less than half were actually enrolled in classes that took this approach. What are these 60 percent telling us? They’re open to expanded educational and training opportunities, such as apprenticeships, as a part of their overall college experience!

As you may remember, last summer, President Trump signed an executive order that gave authority to two-year and four-year higher educational institutions to incorporate apprenticeships into their courses of study. In response, the Department of Labor announced the Task Force on Apprenticeship Expansion. The Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities (APLU) nominated me to serve as their representative. APLU's 237 members span across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, four U.S. territories, Canada, and Mexico.

Labor Secretary Alex Acosta stated in announcing the initiative that “Expanding apprenticeships will help Americans learn the skills they need to fill jobs that are open right now and in the future. I am pleased to see business leaders, unions, educational institutions, and industry groups come together to help the American worker”; Secretary Acosta Chaired, Secretary of Commerce Ross and Secretary of Education DeVos co-chaired.

There were twenty named to the Task Force. The mission? To identify strategies and proposals to promote apprenticeships, especially in sectors where apprenticeships are insufficient.

Last month, we completed our final report on how we can promote and expand apprenticeships. The final report had four components: (1) Education and Credentialing, (2) Attracting Business to Apprenticeship, (3) Expanding Access, Equity and Career Awareness, (4) Administrative and Regulatory Strategies to Expand Apprenticeship.

The final report had 26 recommendations. One of the key recommendations laid out by the Education and Credentialing Subcommittee, of which I was a member, was the creation of Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAPs). This more flexible apprenticeship model would provide a new pathway that gives industry organizations and employers more autonomy and authority to identify high quality apprenticeship programs and opportunities. Its emphasis would be around standard-based, nationally portable, industry-recognized credentials that would better align to both the theory and performance-based learning outcomes required.

Florida needs to find ways to incentivize deeper collaboration and partnerships between educational institutions and the private sector. In many ways, the report was our first step into the future – and a way to get us all – educators, industry partners, businesses – to begin thinking about how we can incorporate workforce training into what we are doing to help build a strong talent pipeline for our community. Now, this is not a challenge that is going to be solved overnight. But, we're making good progress.

Conversation and collaboration is always a good start. And one thing is clear: the report is a call to action. It pushes for both higher education and employers to start being more progressive about learning and earning opportunities. After all, we're in this together; we rely on one another. And the fact is that a strong educational ecosystem is critical to the economic vitality and success of our community. It grows the economy faster than other more traditional measures of economic development.

So, where do we go from here? If there is any state that can lead the nation in getting this done – it's Florida! We have made tremendous progress in creating more jobs. This region is an incredible cluster of talent. As I have said for many years, our geography is our destiny. We are the gateway to the Americas. We have a thriving start-up ecosystem, and an ever-growing creative economy. We have an outstanding, thriving and collaborative educational ecosystem. Colleges and universities in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties go above and beyond every day.

We also have great partnerships with our state colleges – and started a program called Connect4Success, which enhances Florida's 2 +2 Pathway to Success Program, and helps transfer students complete their education at FIU. Our institutions already work very closely with industry partners to remain responsive to their needs, while also providing students with an education that is enriched through collaboration.

At FIU, we routinely make sure that our degree programs are relevant and give our students the skills and knowledge employers need. But, this is just the beginning! Our work is never over – and never done. We need to continue to leverage these relationships.

All higher educational institutions – both universities and colleges – need to continue to be active partners with one another and with industry. This is how we will continue to blur county lines and work together to develop and grow the talent in our region.

I would like to look at several examples of some models that could help us accelerate our work on apprenticeships in Florida. One example of a partnership that could help connect students to apprenticeships is a model like the Talent Development Network (TDN). TDN is how we collaborate with our community to help grow an internship culture in Miami.

TDN focuses on creating internship opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in seven in-demand industries: aerospace; creative design; hospitality and leisure; information technology; life sciences and health care; international banking; finance and trade and logistics. To date, TDN has helped connect nearly 250 students to internships. We need to build talent pipelines like this one – and incorporate apprenticeships in these in-demand fields!

Another fantastic example comes from our partner institution Miami Dade College. President Padron is always looking to move the needle! Recently, MDC took an important step in creating an apprenticeship hub here in Miami. Last month, they launched a groundbreaking apprenticeship program called MDC WORKS: Apprenticeship Program, which is the first of its kind at an academic institution in Florida. It's the result of a partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor, Florida Department of Education and major industry partners.

The MDC WORKS: Apprenticeship Program is a new component of the college's MDC WORKS – a next generation career center focused on career and technical education, facilitating internships, apprenticeships and professional development. It will serve individuals seeking a pathway to education and high-paying jobs, while accelerating industry growth in various key areas, including: aviation, technology, banking, trade and logistics, and more!

CareerSource Florida is yet another example. They have been a leader in not only talking about the skills gap, but creating real change! They have brought industry and educational institutions into the conversation, and have also made important strides in establishing apprenticeship opportunities. It's all because of Apprenticeship Florida.

There are some challenges we face in expanding apprenticeships. (1) Student interest and engagement: many do not know the benefits of apprenticeships and lack "career awareness". (2) Students' exposure to marketable skills they need to qualify for good jobs and enter the workforce: businesses need to continue to communicate their needs to workforce agencies and higher education. (3) Negative perceptions of apprenticeships: we must overcome these ideas and re-invent apprenticeships. (4) Employer buy-in and participation: small businesses especially are afraid of the return on investment and that employees may not stay with them.

Staying ahead of the change requires us all to work together. Our communities have always been better when we all come together – and work together – toward a better future.

This is what we need. This is what our world demands. This is what our future depends on.

Modern apprenticeships are not a path away from a college degree, but a part of a learner's educational journey. Together, we can take the traditional apprenticeship and bring it into the 21st century – and envision a new structure where our students learn from both professors and from working on the job.

Again, collaboration is key. The successful expansion of apprenticeships is going to require the close collaboration of the private sector, state and local government, higher education, unions and trade associations. The change begins with us! It begins with industry-led partnerships helping create, manage and certify apprenticeship programs! I know we can make this happen!

Now I would like to open up the floor to any questions.