

UPCEA Releases Higher Ed Playbook for Accelerating Growth of Credential Innovation

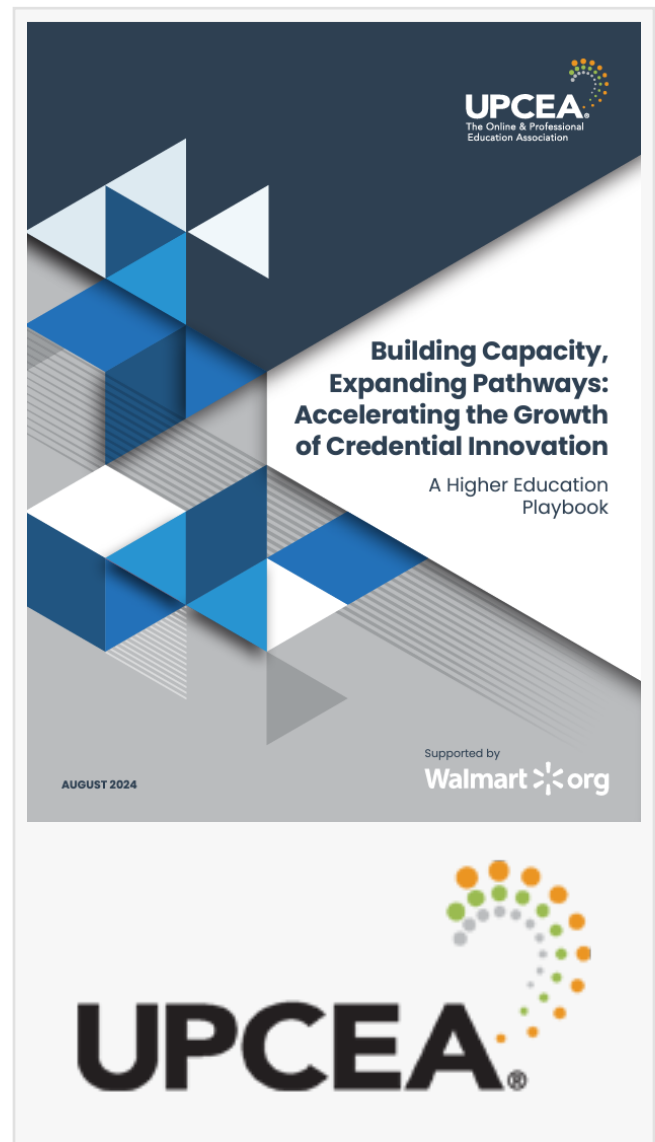
Grant-funded project delivers promising practices to help institutions engage their local business community in the development of noncredit microcredentials

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, August 12, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- UPCEA, the online and professional education association, today published a new higher education playbook, supported by a grant from Walmart, and aimed at accelerating the development and delivery of noncredit, short-term credentials that are effectively directed at the workplace.

[“Building Capacity, Expanding Pathways: Accelerating the Growth of Credential Innovation in Higher Education”](#) features lessons learned and promising practices discovered by 10 institutions during a year-long project focused on credential innovation and grounded by collaboration with the business community. The 10 institutions, which were selected from approximately 40 applicants, vary in size and represent different institutional types (public/private and Carnegie category) and geographic regions across the U.S.

[Research](#) released by UPCEA earlier this year as part of the grant-funded project revealed increased momentum for credential innovation, but a lack of consistent and scalable processes for developing and pricing alternative credential programs. The research suggested that one of the ways institutions can advance these programs is by engaging with employers.

“This project allowed UPCEA to help 10 varied institutions engage more deeply with industry partners to create the building blocks for developing in-demand microcredentials,” said Amy Heitzman, UPCEA Deputy CEO, Chief Learning Officer and Co-Principal Investigator for the grant. “By leveraging custom research, the power of peer mentoring, and each institution’s unique





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Aaron Brower, Strategic Advisor to UPCEA

relationship in the community, we collectively have moved the needle forward to help build capacity critical to learner success.”

The support provided to each participating institution included custom market opportunity research, interviews with local businesses, and one-on-one consultations that provided individual assistance and encouragement. This effort produced local business connections that generated an outline for at least one custom or semi-custom noncredit training program.

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training in order for it to remain competitive in our fast-moving economy – microcredentials and other noncredit training fill this need,” explained Aaron Brower, Strategic Advisor to UPCEA and Co-Principal Investigator for the grant. “This project allowed UPCEA to find even more ways to help colleges and universities expand their ability to offer the high-quality microcredentials that are most needed by their local businesses and communities.”

UPCEA is making the playbook available to all institutions seeking to accelerate their own efforts to produce noncredit microcredentials directed toward their local, regional or statewide business communities. The 54-page playbook includes lessons learned, 10 actionable next steps to move the field forward, and 10 instructive case studies of the participating institutions, including: Kansas State University, National University, North Carolina A&T State University, Schoolcraft College, University of California, Davis, University of Maine System, University of North Texas, Vanderbilt University, Villanova University, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Building Capacity, Expanding Pathways: Accelerating the Growth of Credential Innovation is available for [download here](#).

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About UPCEA

UPCEA is the online and professional education association. Our members continuously reinvent higher education, positively impacting millions of lives. We proudly lead and support them through cutting edge research, professional development, networking and mentorship, conferences and seminars, and stakeholder advocacy. Our collaborative, entrepreneurial community brings together decision makers and influencers in education, industry, research, and policy interested in improving educational access and outcomes. Learn more about us at UPCEA.edu and follow us on social media @UPCEA.

Molly Nelson

UPCEA

[email us here](#)

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