

# Reimagining Michigan's Workforce Development Policy

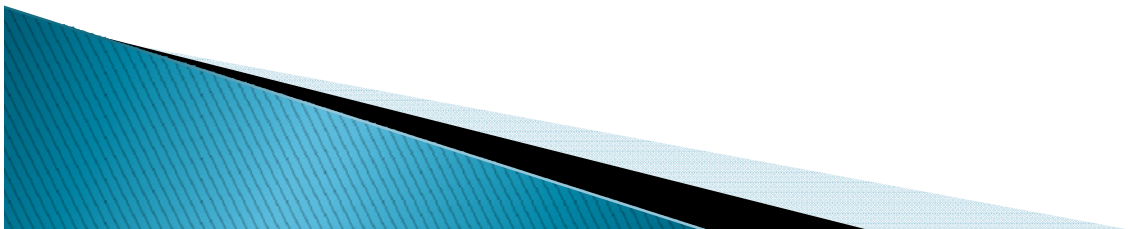
Michigan Family Impact Seminar  
April 26, 2012

Presented by Larry Good  
Chair, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce  
[lagood@skilledwork.org](mailto:lagood@skilledwork.org)



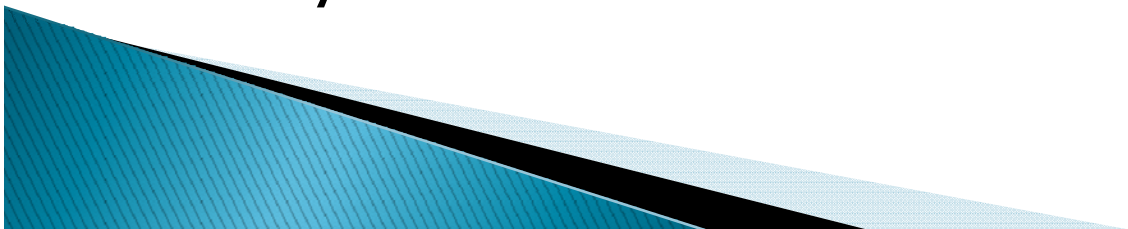
# Why Reimagine Workforce Development?

- ▶ Michigan's economy is in the midst of transforming – as is the nation's
- ▶ Federal workforce investment laws & programs were designed before the Internet – solutions for a different era



# Challenges are very large

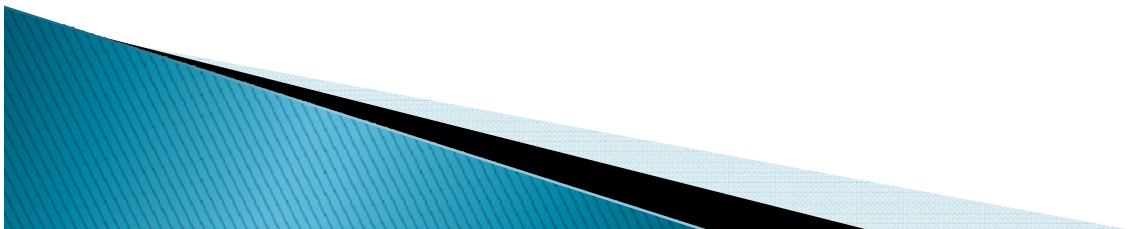
- ▶ Michigan workers are getting poorer – 36<sup>th</sup> in per capita income
- ▶ 100,000 Michigan workers have been unemployed for a year or longer – a level not seen since the Depression
- ▶ At same time, we see daily headlines about employers who can't find workers with skills they need



# Educational attainment matters...

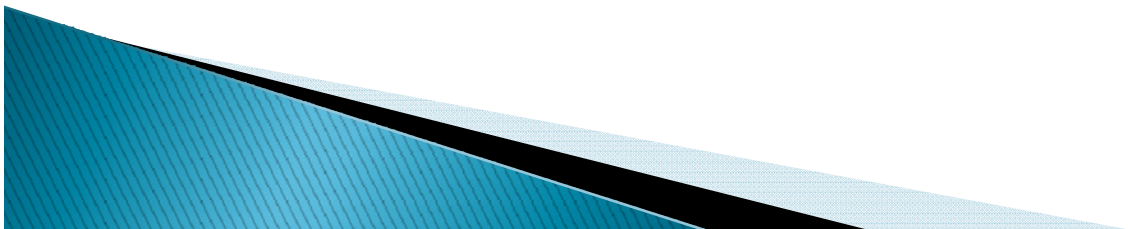
- ▶ Higher educational attainment results in higher earnings
- ▶ 62% of Michigan's 2018 jobs will require a post-secondary credential

*Opportunity in the new economy requires workers to possess a post-secondary degree or certificate.*



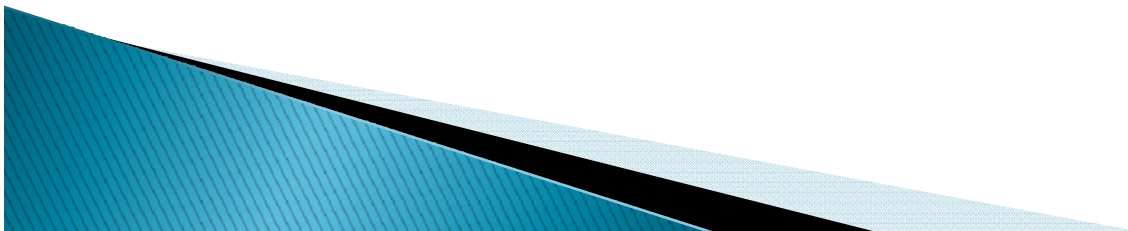
## ...and Michigan is lagging, not leading

- ▶ 36% of working-age adults have associate's degree or higher
  - Puts Michigan below national average
  - Percentage is improving, but far too slowly
  - 23% for blacks; 21% for Hispanics, Native Americans
- ▶ 1 out of 3 working age adults lack essential basic skills
  - Worse than national average
  - Essentially blocked from paths to good jobs now



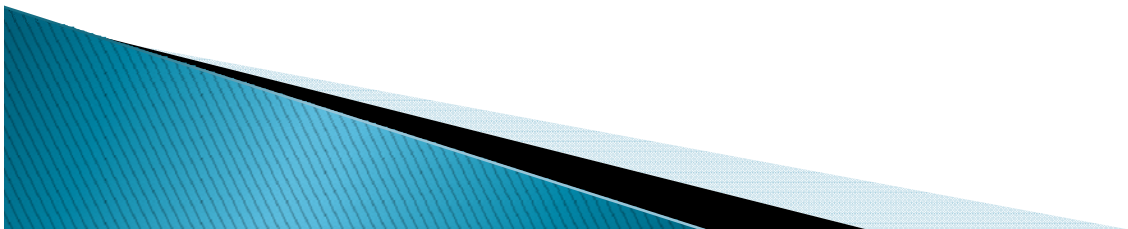
**Michigan's workforce imperative:**

**Increasing educational attainment of  
post-secondary degrees and certificates**



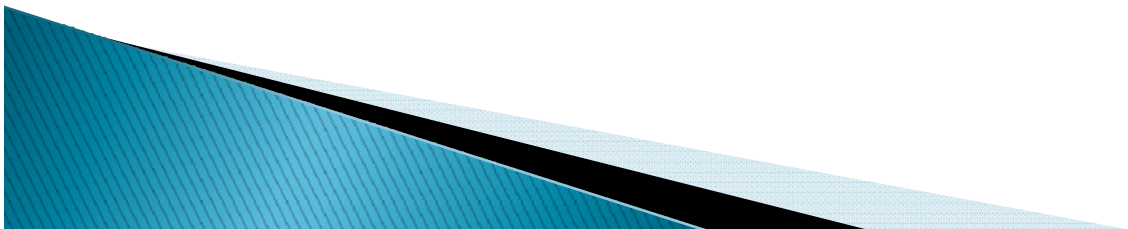
# Need is academic AND technical

- ▶ Michigan needs more workers with varying levels and types of post-secondary credentials:
  - PhD's, Master's and Bachelor's Degrees important
  - But so are technical skill credentials
- ▶ Technical, industry-used certificates can carry high market value



# 7 Principles for Workforce Investment Public Policy

1. Increase educational attainment
2. Substantially improve career navigation
3. Operate through industry–education sector/cluster partnerships
4. Embrace innovation to accelerate learning
5. Embrace continuing learning & change
6. Operate at speed of global economy
7. Reinvest in adult & post–secondary education





# 1. Increase educational attainment

## ▶ Urgency

- In states moving faster than Michigan, guiding coalition drives this as an imperative

## ▶ Set a clear goal – and measure progress towards it

- Lumina's 60% by 2025

## ▶ Undertake combination of strategies

- Increase completion of degrees once started
- Increase flow from Adult Basic Ed to degrees
- Focus on retraining for working adults
- Target increasing attainment for persons of color



## 2. Improve career navigation

- ▶ **Disinvestment in counseling/advising**
  - Victim of budget cuts in every system
  - No one's "core business"
- ▶ **Lots of noise, hard to navigate**
  - Tons on web sites; not clear what to trust
  - Hard to keep up with speed of industry changes
- ▶ **Need "hi tech, hi touch" combination**
  - Web sites that are current, accurate, easy to use
  - Cadre of skilled navigators



### 3. Operate Thru Industry–Education Sector/Cluster Partnerships

- ▶ **Big, new approach to workforce development**
  - Organize groups of employers from industry with educators to define needs and create solutions
  - Focus both on meeting employer needs and providing career paths for workers
- ▶ **Industry partnerships work**
  - Improve employer results – turnover, rework
  - Improve worker results – increased earnings
- ▶ **Momentum in Michigan**
  - Regional Skills Alliances
  - State Cluster Teams



## 4. Embrace Innovation to Accelerate Learning

### ▶ Speed matters

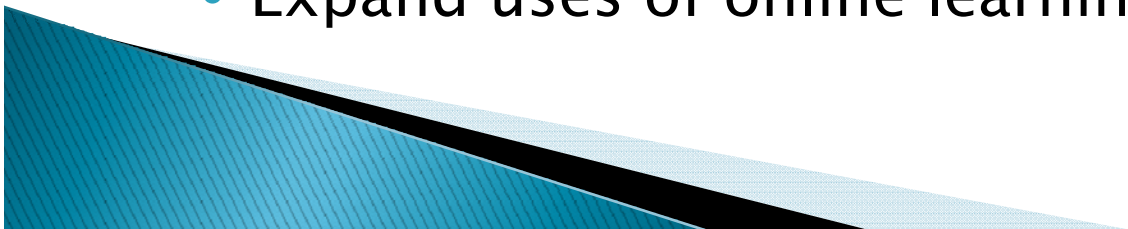
- Michigan can't meet a 60% goal without it
- Workers need it given income needs

### ▶ Become a Promising Practices Leader

- Lots of innovations in other states to build upon
- Michigan needs to become a leading experimenter

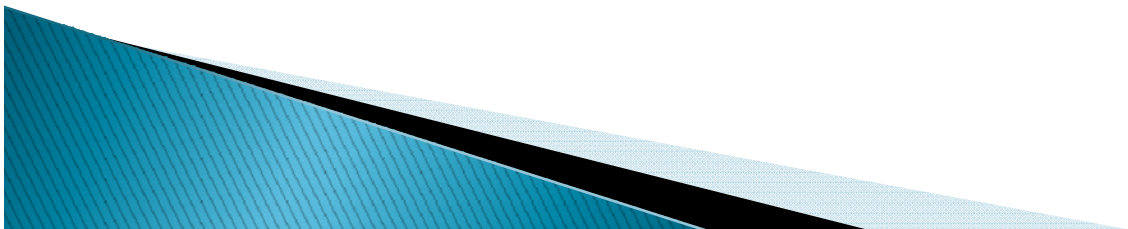
### ▶ Accelerate learning

- Get out of “semesters only” box
- Build basic skills within context of occupational training – simultaneously
- Expand uses of online learning



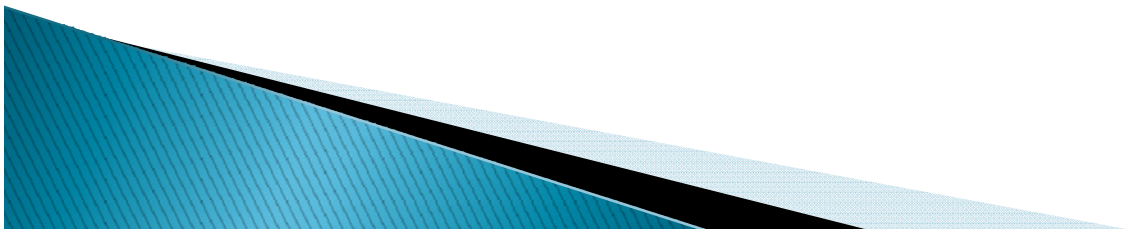
## 5. Embrace Continuing Learning & Change

- ▶ **Lifelong Learning: rhetoric to reality**
  - Speed of global change demands it
  - Only lifelong learners will keep pace
- ▶ **Value adaptability**
  - Get smart about how to translate what someone knows into readiness for new jobs that emerge
  - Embrace change, don't hide from it



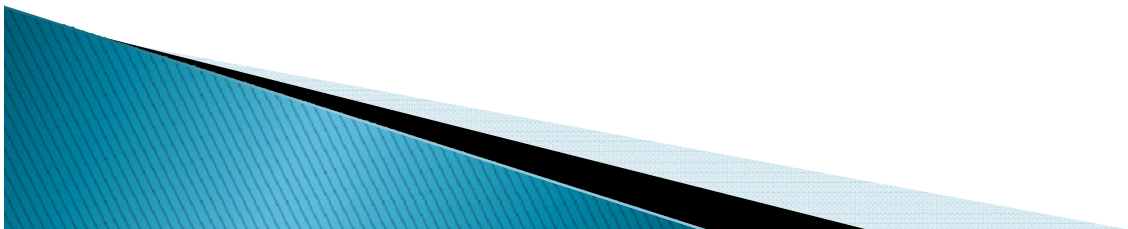
## 6. Operate at Speed of Global Economy

- ▶ **Public programs change too slowly**
  - Operate in multi-year planning cycles
  - Most major changes take years to effect
- ▶ **Most companies now change swiftly or die**
  - Autos as a “before/after” example
  - Microsoft struggling to sustain their dominance
- ▶ **Reinvent how workforce agencies & colleges operate**
  - Increase speed of decision-making, action
  - Western Governors University example



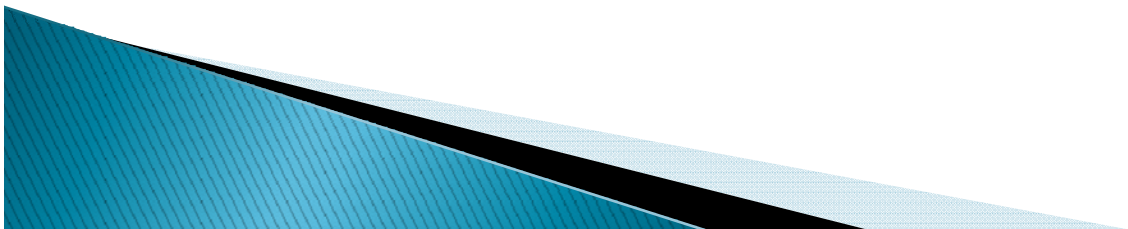
## 7. Reinvest in Adult & Post-Secondary Education

- ▶ **Scale of Disinvestment Has Been Tragic**
  - We've moved from being a leading state to a bottom of the list state in every segment – adult ed, community colleges, universities
  - Without changing that, Michigan cannot achieve the educational attainment we urgently need



# Undertaking a campaign of scalable improvement

- ▶ Michigan needs to tackle this at the “race to the moon” level of urgency, investment and commitment.
- ▶ Each of the last (at least) five governors have named increasing educational attainment as a crucial goal.
  - Lots of blue ribbon commissions, projects
  - Issue now is tackling and sustaining action





# Example: No Worker Left Behind

- ▶ Major initiative by Gov. Granholm
- ▶ Offered up to two years of free post-secondary education to unemployed and low-income workers
- ▶ Had to result in credential valued by employers
- ▶ Without major marketing, 160,000 enrolled

*Michigan workers are ready to embrace lifelong learning – if its visible, accessible, affordable*

