



**Increasing Postsecondary Attainment:  
A Civic and Economic Imperative**

**Tom Cheney, Director**

# Agenda

- History
- State Attainment Goal: 70x2025
- Why Act? The Economic and Civic Imperatives
- A Call for Change
- State Policy
- Advance Vermont's Role
- Strategies to Increase Attainment
- Questions and Discussion: How can you and your institution make an impact?

## State Attainment Goal: 70x2025

*“It shall be the goal of the State of Vermont that not less than 70 percent of working age Vermonters will hold a credential of value, as defined by the State Workforce Development Board, by the year 2025”*

# Economic Imperative



**80%**

of Vermont's high-growth, high-wage jobs in the next ten years (2018-2028) will require a credential of value.



**65%**

of all jobs in the Vermont will require postsecondary education or training by 2020.



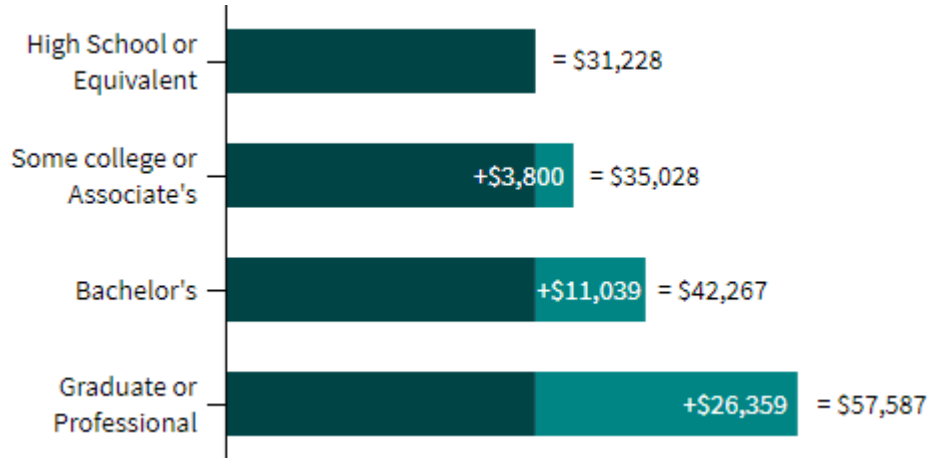
**64%**

of employers in Vermont face difficulty when hiring, according to the most recent Vermont Business Roundtable business conditions survey.

# Civic Imperative



Education is the most effective way to break the cycle of poverty.



Vermonters with a postsecondary credential are:



More likely to vote



More likely to have healthy families



More likely to be engaged in the community



Less likely to be food insecure



Less likely to experience homelessness

# The Challenge



**1 in 4** Vermonters do not have access to fixed, high-speed broadband internet, which disproportionately affects those in rural areas.



Only **16 percent** of Vermont's Class of 2012 first-generation boys obtained an educational credential within 4 years of high school graduation.

**22 percent** of Vermont's indigenous population holds a bachelor's degree, compared to 37 percent of their white peers.



Vermonters in adult and juvenile corrections facilities are **ineligible** for federal financial aid, and still may be upon release.



# The Challenge



Vermont **ranks 49th** in the country for higher education funding per public school student.



Before financial aid, an average Vermont family would spend **95 percent** of its household income to send one person to college.



The average student debt for Vermont bachelor's degree recipients in 2017 was **\$30,651**.

**60 percent** of Vermont bachelor's degree recipients in 2017 graduated college with student debt.



Only **34 percent** of Vermonters without a postsecondary degree believe degree and credential programs are affordable.



# Where are we today?





# A Call for Change

- 2009: Government and higher education leaders sign compact to increase college attainment to 60 percent by 2019
- 2016: Cross-sector convening selects 70 percent by 2025 goal; is inclusive of credentials and college degrees
- 2017: Advance Vermont (known as 70x2025vt at the time) was established to lead collective-impact effort to reach 70 by 2025 goal
- 2019: Governor Scott signs bill (H. 533) to codify state attainment goal and four core policy priorities

# State Policies to Increase Attainment

1. Promote awareness of career pathways and value of postsecondary education and training
2. Expand access to postsecondary education and training to students of all ages.
3. Increase completion of postsecondary education and training programs by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to succeed.
4. Maximize partnerships across and within sectors to achieve state workforce development goals.

# Advance Vermont: **Vision and Mission**

## **Vision:**

An educated Vermont citizenry that powers a prosperous and resilient economy and vibrant, civically engaged communities.

## **Mission:**

Advance the civic and economic vitality of Vermont by growing the number of Vermonters with degrees and credentials, increasing equity in educational attainment, and strengthening connections between education, training and employment.

# Leadership & Partners

To date, Council and Working Groups represent 60 organizations across the state:

- Business
- Early Learning
- Pk-12 Education
- Postsecondary Education
- Government
- Non-Profits
- Philanthropy

# Advance Vermont Level: **Communications**

## → **Public Awareness**

- Diversity of postsecondary opportunities and pathways
- How to take the first step and access supports

## → **Influencer Awareness**

- Importance of postsecondary attainment to individuals, economy, communities
- Effective communication, programming, and policy interventions

# Advance Vermont Level: Data & Research

- **Research and share state/national trends**
- **Data Dashboard**
  - Postsecondary Readiness
  - Aspiration
  - Affordability
  - Enrollment
  - Completion
  - Career Readiness



# Advance Vermont Lever: Policy

- Advocate for **institutional and public policy** advancing attainment and workforce development goals
- **Influence decisionmakers**
  - Legislators
  - Employers
  - Educational Leadership
  - Government Officials
  - Non-Profit and Philanthropic Leadership
  - Community Leaders

# Advance Vermont Level: **Convening**

- **Coordinate with state level partners** across sectors
- Develop, document and **share best practices**
- **Convene stakeholders and content experts**
  - Vermont Apprenticeship Summit
  - SWDB Training and Credentialing Work Group
  - Workforce Development Summit
  - Ongoing collaboration and coordination informed by WIOA State Plan, CEDS, Vermont Apprenticeship Council, Vermont Talent Pipeline Management, Vermont Futures Project, McClure Foundation and more



# Strategies to Increase Attainment: State Priorities

1. Promote awareness of career pathways and value of postsecondary education and training
2. Expand access to postsecondary education and training to students of all ages.
3. Increase completion of postsecondary education and training programs by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to succeed.
4. Maximize partnerships across and within sectors to achieve state workforce development goals.

# Strategies to Increase Attainment: Awareness

1. **Promote awareness of career pathways and value of postsecondary education and training.**
  - Reinforce education and training after high school as an individual and public good
  - Highlight the variety of education and training options, particularly non-degree credentials

# Strategies to Increase Attainment: Access

## 2. Expand access to postsecondary education and training to students of all ages.

- Make education and training more affordable
- Focus on equity
- Expand non-degree program offerings
- Promote Pk-12 flexible pathways initiatives

# Strategies to Increase Attainment: **Completion**

## 3. Increase completion of postsecondary education and training programs by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to succeed.

- Develop programs that accelerate the time to complete credentials of value
- Support innovative financing strategies that support completion
- Remove institutional barriers to completion

# Strategies to Increase Attainment: **Partnerships**

## 4. Maximize partnerships across and within sectors to achieve state workforce development goals.

- Deepen collaboration between education and training providers, human service agencies, employers, and state government
- Foster multi-sector partnerships to develop education and training programs
- Ensure access to work-based learning at secondary and postsecondary level
- Incentivize and promote employer-sponsored education and training

# Questions & Discussion

**How is your institution supporting access for learners of all backgrounds?**

**How is your institution supporting all students towards completion?**

**How can your institutions better support equity in access and success (completion) for students?**

**What can you do in your role?**





**Tom Cheney, Director**  
**[cheney@vsac.org](mailto:cheney@vsac.org)**  
**802.542.2217**