



LET'S CELEBRATE SKILLS-BASED CAREERS

Students don't need a four-year degree to succeed.





There's a growing workforce shortage in many skills-based industries. That's an opportunity for young people interested in a faster, more affordable pathway to a rewarding, good-paying career.

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WHY WE NEED TO SOLVE THE SKILLS GAP



85%
high school graduation rates

45%

UN- & UNDER-EMPLOYED
COLLEGE GRADS



2.6 million
skills-based jobs unfilled*

**WIDENING
SKILLS GAP**

The 4-year graduation rate for students at public colleges is **33.3%**.

U.S. student loan debt is staggering: **\$1.71 trillion**.

There's a better way.

30 million jobs in the United States do not require a bachelor's degree yet pay median earnings of \$55,000 or more.

**Provided by Emsi (economicmodeling.com)*

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE PATH TO SUCCESS

The Problem

Students have watched previous generations rack up tremendous debt to obtain four-year degrees – and they don't think that's the only path to success. Meanwhile, there are thousands of employers who can't find workers with the necessary skills for vital industries.



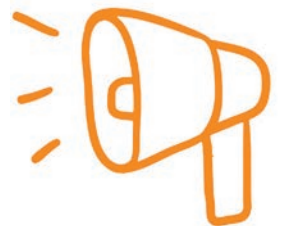
The Opportunity

There are thousands of jobs available in key skills-based industries. Preparation for those jobs doesn't require a four-year degree, which means it won't take as long to start earning a paycheck and establish your career.



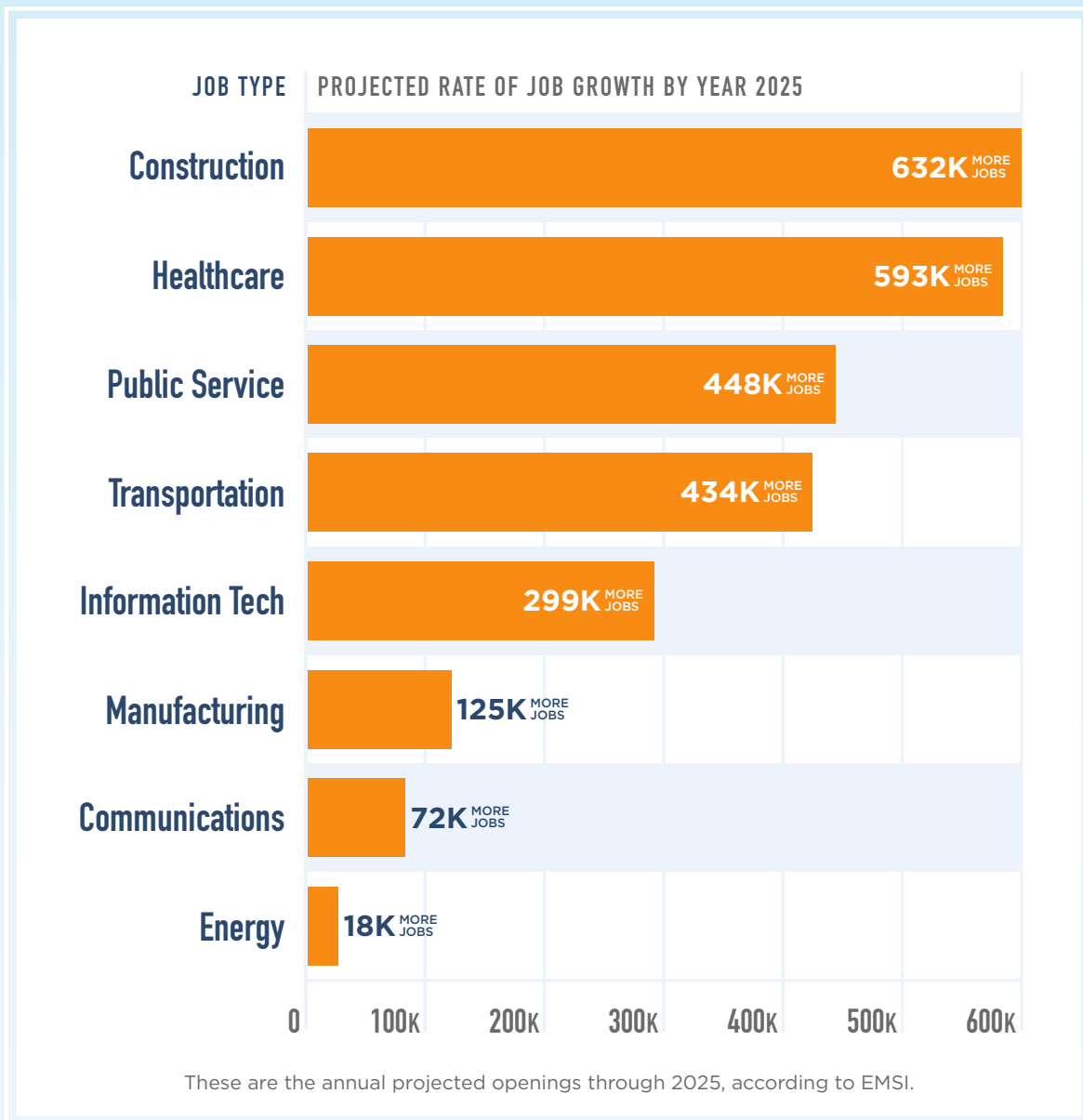
The Solution

SkillPointe connects job seekers with education, training and employment opportunities in skills-focused industries, including healthcare, construction, information technology and manufacturing.



Pick your path. Find the training. Get the job.

THESE JOBS ARE IN DEMAND, RIGHT NOW



There's so much opportunity in the skilled-based realm — but not everyone is aware of it. These numbers make it **crystal clear**. They show the number of projected openings each year through 2025, and they add up to a **2.6 million available jobs**.



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SKILLS-BASED CAREERS?



When we say skills-based careers or skilled trades, we're talking about in-demand, rewarding careers that require industry-specific skills but not a bachelor's degree. Think healthcare, information technology, energy, communication, transportation, public service — and that's in addition to the industries that fit the "traditional" definition of the trades, like construction and manufacturing.



It's heartbreaking that half of the students leaving high school to pursue traditional four-year degrees drop out after two years with no certifications. That's the single greatest reason we started SkillPointe.

TODD WILSON, founder and managing partner, SkillPointe



WHO SAYS YOU NEED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE?

“College has never been the right path for everybody.”

“Thousands of kids are going to college because they think they are supposed to go, because their parents and teachers said, ‘You need to get an education,’ so they borrow money to come out with a [general] degree that doesn’t point them in any particular direction,” says Ken Rusk, a construction worker turned entrepreneur, advocate and author of “Blue Collar Cash.”

The good news is that there are excellent alternatives to earning a four-year degree — options that require less time, less money and result in secure, good-paying jobs in vital industries.



These paths share a common goal of training students for specific roles. They are also readily available — and that’s where SkillPointe comes in. The site lists more than 50,000 training programs across eight industries.

3 ALTERNATIVE PATHS TO SUCCESS

1

Trade schools and technical schools:

These workforce-focused programs prepare students for a specific career in the shortest amount of time. Programs typically take 18 to 24 months to complete. The hands-on training leads to an industry certification.

2

Community colleges:

This path is also career-focused but often offers a broader educational approach. The focus depends on the specific program. Students earn associate degrees, which take two years.

3

Certificates: This is more incremental than the other two options. A certificate represents completion of a course or courses with a specific focus. Certificates can be earned individually or stacked on top of a trade school or community college program as a way to stay up to date. They can also be a gateway to a degree or program.

SUCCESS STORY



“

I didn't even know welding was a thing until I was in my 20s. No one talked to me about going to trade school or all of the opportunities in the trades. It was the job I never knew I wanted.

OLIVIA McCLEERY, *welding instructor,*
Lincoln Electric

”

EXPECTATIONS ARE CHANGING

Four in 10 working college graduates say their work doesn't require a bachelor's degree, according to recent Gallup research, but businesses have been slow to adjust their job requirements.

That's changing.

Companies of all stripes — Google, Apple, Merck, Hilton and IBM, to name just a few — have dropped the four-year degree requirement for certain jobs because it eliminates qualified candidates. Instead they look for skills or certifications. It's a trend that's here to stay.

SUCCESS STORY



Regardless of having a degree or what your degree is in, technology is a rapidly changing industry that requires continuous on-the-job learning.

It's not like in the movies, where tech-savvy people sit in a dark computer room in front of a giant wall of monitors, banging away at their keyboards while hacker-looking feedback scrolls rapidly on the screen. Development is a lot of research, thinking through the problem, and more time is spent on testing and re-working the code than the actual code-writing.

RACHEL MELTZER, *software developer*



HOW TO FIND YOUR PATH



WHAT DO THE TESTS MEASURE?

There are many assessments, and they all work differently. Here are a few examples:

YouScience: This program translates interests (what you like to do) and aptitudes (what you're good at) into possible career pathways. It takes 90 minutes to complete.

Pymetrics: This test includes a series of games or activities. With it, recruiters weigh a candidate's behavioral attributes against a set of "ideal" traits for a specific role. The full test takes between 25 to 35 minutes.

MajorClarity: This includes a personality assessment, job fit scores and a visual/interactive platform for middle school and high school students to "test drive" careers while maximizing retention and comprehension. The assessment takes 5 minutes. Each test drive ranges from 15-25 minutes.

Traitify: This system includes a mobile app that uses human interaction with images to assess personality types and traits. It takes about 90 seconds.

1

Ask yourself some questions: What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing?

2

Take an assessment test, which at the most basic level matches your likes and dislikes with potential careers, some of which you may have never considered. **Take the SkillPointe quiz** to get started.

To learn more, try additional career discovery tools. There are many to consider, as the box at left explains.

3

If you took the SkillPointe quiz, you have a list of possible careers. Now learn what it's like to be in those jobs and what it takes to get there. Go to SkillPointe's **Explore Careers** section.

4

Find a match? Check out education and training options near you through SkillPointe's **training** page.

HOW DOES THIS TRANSLATE INTO A CAREER?

Let's use the SkillPointe assessment to show how this can work. You rate activities, and the test ranks your answers to reveal your top traits.

YOU'RE DONE! YOUR TOP 3 TRAITS:

1 REALISTIC

People with Realistic interests like work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and answers. They like working with plants and animals, and real-world materials, like wood, tools, and machinery. They enjoy outside work.

1

2 INVESTIGATIVE

People with Investigative interests like work that has to do with ideas and thinking rather than physical activity or leading people. They like to search for facts and figure out problems.

2

3 ARTISTIC

People with Artistic interests like work that deals with the artistic side of things, such as acting, music, art, and design. They like creativity in their work and work that can be done without following a set of rules.

3

[Retake Assessment](#)

The traits above translate to jobs in different industries that could be a good fit, including electrician, HVAC tech, environmental field tech, medical sonographer or graphic designer.

Some of the jobs on your list may sound appealing and some may not. That's OK — they show you jobs you are naturally good at. You can explore from there.

These tests are just the start. You should also talk to an advisor. Their knowledge will open your eyes to opportunities and help you navigate the process.

THE POWER OF ADVISING

Linda Garcia, executive director of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, can't say enough about how important good advising is to the process of finding your path.

The center's goal is making sure students find their path and stay on it.

"We want them to get to the finish line, whether that be a credential, an associate degree or a good-paying job," she says. To do that, advising must be a mandatory part of the process. "Once students spend time with an advisor, they are so glad they did."

HOW SKILLS TRANSLATE TO IN-DEMAND CAREERS



Do you communicate well?

Auto mechanic
Electrician
Electro-Mechanical technician
Firefighter
MRI technician
AV technician



Are you good with your hands?

Occupational therapy assistant
Aircraft mechanic
Phlebotomist
Surgical technologist
Vet tech
Broadcast engineer



Are you good at math?

Architectural drafter
Carpenter

Civil engineering technician
Electrical and electronics
engineering technician
Electrician
Electro-mechanical technician
HVAC technician
Industrial engineering technician
Machinist
Metal fabricator
Nuclear technician
Pharmacy technician
Pipefitter/Steamfitter
Radiology tech
Security alarm tech/installer



Are you good at troubleshooting?

Aircraft mechanic
Auto mechanic
AV technician
Broadcast engineering tech
Cable/fiber optics technician
Heavy equipment mechanic
Metal fabricator

continued on next page



Are you detail-oriented?

- Aircraft mechanic
- Architectural drafter
- Auto body technician
- Auto mechanic
- Cardiovascular technician
- Carpenter
- Construction equipment operator
- Database administrator
- Dental assistant
- Dental hygienist
- Diesel mechanic
- Electrical and Electronics
- Engineering Technician
- Electrical lineman
- Electro-mechanical technician
- Graphic designer
- Heavy equipment mechanic



Are you calm under pressure?

- EMT and paramedic
- Firefighter
- Lab technician
- Licensed practical nurse (LPN/LVN)
- Phlebotomist
- Police officer
- Surgical technologist

APPRENTICESHIPS PAY OFF

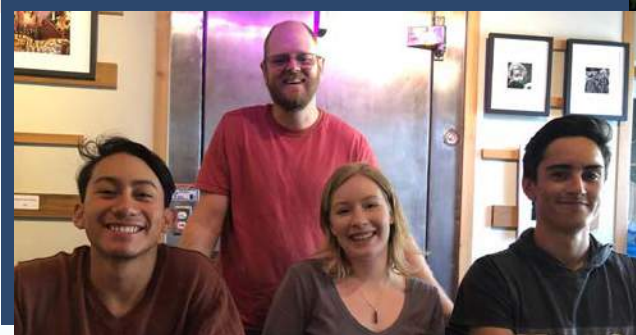


During my last year of high school, I did not know what I wanted to do for a career, and I was apprehensive of the cost of most education programs. I knew I liked working with my hands, staying on my feet, and problem solving. Being introduced to Cummins Technician Apprenticeship Program provided with me a priceless education for a job I love. Skilled trade jobs are in high demand, and Cummins has given me industry value that I couldn't find elsewhere. I would encourage you to explore your options and shadow jobs that interest you the most. I've never regretted my choice to join TAP.

JOHN RETZLAFF, valedictorian of the Cummins' award-winning Technician Apprenticeship Program (TAP 3) with an associate of science (AAS) diesel/heavy truck program



TAKING THE SKILLED TRADES FOR A TEST DRIVE



Some people are just naturally gifted at building, but if they don't have shop class, they don't get the chance to find out what their gift is. The idea is that you should do what you're good at, and that's going to be the greatest benefit to both yourself and society as a whole.

SEAN TICKNOR, founder of *Big Skills Tiny Homes*, a nonprofit that encourages students to consider the trades by having them build a tiny home from scratch.

LEARN MORE about how Ticknor worked with students to build a tiny home in Marin County, California.

(Credit: Sean Ticknor/Big Skills Little Homes)

RIPE FOR OPPORTUNITY:

About 54% of Gen Z say they want to start their own companies, according to Nielson. The skilled trades are an ideal way to reach that goal because the jobs are in **high-demand** and they lend themselves to **self-employment**, which is often a **home-based business**.

CEFGA HELPS CREATE SUCCESS STORIES

Evan Magee saw the possibilities of a career in construction long before he graduated from high school. That's because he participated in a CEFGA-certified construction program.

During school, he did work-based learning on commercial construction projects in Atlanta, including one with Holder Construction Company, which hired him full-time after he graduated. His success as a field associate earned him CEFGA's K12 Pipeline Graduate of the Year award for 2019.

Evan now plays a key role in managing a \$30 million project in Alabama. He's a great example of what's possible with [CEFGA](#), a Georgia nonprofit dedicated to changing lives by helping people of all ages get prepared for and placed in rewarding, high-paying careers in construction and other skilled trades.



You see an accomplishment and take pride in your work.



EVAN MAGEE, *senior field coordinator, Holder Construction*

NO IMAGE PROBLEM HERE

90% of high school students had a **positive view** of construction careers after participating in career tours. That backs up 2020 National Kitchen and Bath Association research showing the skilled trades don't have an image problem but an **information problem**. In a survey, the majority of students said a **better understanding of career paths** would help attract them to these careers.

LEARNING MATTERS — MORE THAN EVER

You don't need a four-year degree to get most skills-based jobs, but you must embrace learning.

The difference is a focused approach — learning the technology and skills required for a specific role and keeping up with changing requirements.

“You wouldn't want a carpenter who doesn't know anything about geometry building your house, a plumber who doesn't know about physics fixing your toilet or a cosmetologist who doesn't understand chemical reactions applying color to your hair,” says Chelle Travis, executive director of SkillsUSA, a nonprofit association working to boost participation in the skilled workforce.

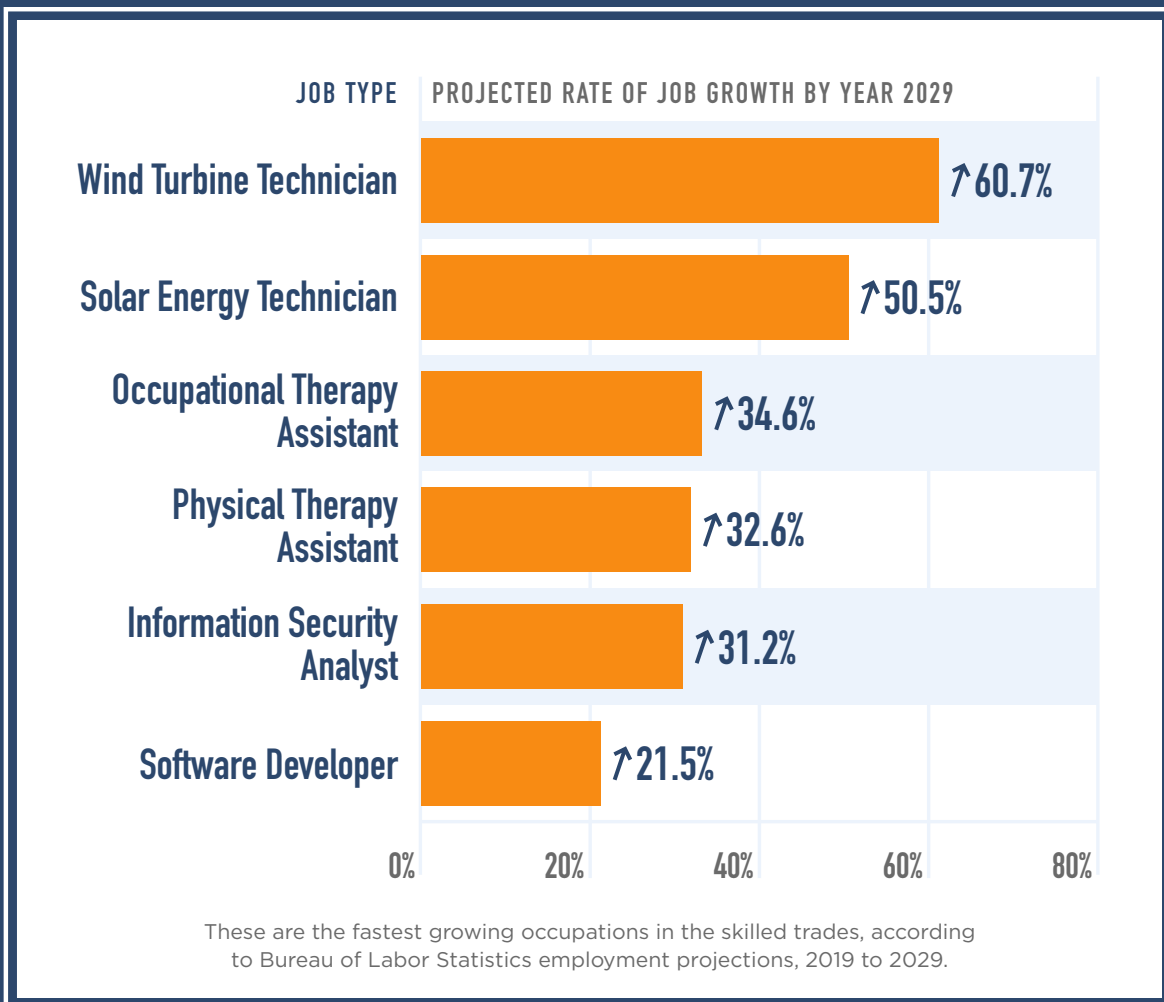
SUCCESS STORY



Education and certifications are the first step of training, however, you have to be a student of the game forever. I don't have all the answers, however, I have the technical aptitude and can-do attitude to solve any challenge that is presented — this is key to your success as a professional.

EDWIN GONZALEZ, *network administrator* 

THE FASTEST-GROWING JOBS RIGHT NOW



There's so much opportunity available in jobs that young people may not even know about. Take a look at the chart above, which shows the projected rate of job growth for the hottest skills-based careers.

Wind turbine technicians lead the way with 60.7% growth predicted by 2029. This is a job that pays \$25.44/hour, adding up to a median salary of about \$53,000 a year. Not bad for a job that requires one or two years of training.

SUCCESS STORY



I was always confused about what I wanted to be when I grew up. When I researched more about this career... it matched everything I had always liked doing — being outdoors, seeing new places and maintaining things. I would have never considered this career just because I didn't know these types of jobs existed.

CHARLIE TRAN, *wind turbine technician*



YES, YOU CAN MAKE A GOOD LIVING!

Many students wonder if a skills-based job will pay the bills. The answer is a resounding yes! If you are talented, these jobs can offer a better return on investment than the traditional four-year college path.

Plus, training takes less time, which means you'll accrue less debt and be earning a paycheck sooner.

For example, you can get trained in less than six months (not counting paid, on-the-job training) for these high-paying occupations that won't disappear tomorrow:

Electrician

- Median salary*: \$56,181
- Projected job growth: 8% from 2019 to 2029

Truck Driver

- Median salary: \$45,261
- Projected job growth: 2% from 2019 to 2029

IT Support Specialist

- Median salary: \$52,000
- Projected job growth: 8% from 2019 to 2029

**Salaries provided by Emsi (economicmodeling.com)*

SUCCESS STORY



I knew that I wanted to be a part of the medical field so that I could help people who were in need physically, mentally or emotionally. It brings me a sense of joy to lend a helping hand, have a listening ear and to provide the utmost care to others.

JOHNDARIUS AKINS, *certified nursing assistant (CNA)*



NEED FINANCIAL HELP?

The SkillPointe Foundation awards hundreds of scholarships annually of \$1,000 or more to individuals pursuing a skill at a community college, trade school or other reputable institution. **[APPLY TODAY!](#)**

This nonprofit organization provides financial assistance to those seeking education, training and/or certification in high-skill jobs that don't require four-year degrees.

The foundation proudly partners with SkillPointe, The Home Depot Foundation, NASCAR and the I Have A Dream Foundation-L.A. to give scholars access to their dreams.

ADDITIONAL \$ RESOURCES:

[Check out SkillPointe's Financial Resources page](#), where you'll find information about additional scholarships, grants and loans.



LOVE THIS? LEARN MORE!

SkillPointe is on a mission to change the conversation about skills-based jobs. If you're interested in learning more, we'd love to hear from you.

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