



[Home](#) / [Newsroom](#) / [News Releases](#) / [Year 2021](#)

California Department of Education News Release

Release: #21-13
February 26, 2021

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State Superintendent Tony Thurmond Congratulates Adult Education Providers in Receiving National Recognition for Programs That Can Lead to Immediate Job Skills

SACRAMENTO—State Superintendent Tony Thurmond today congratulated eight California adult education providers for being recognized as finalists in the U.S. Department of Education’s “Rethink Adult Education Challenge,” a program that highlights exceptional pre-apprenticeship programs that equip people with the knowledge and skills they need to enter and succeed in apprenticeship programs. The state finalists will now move on to stage two of the challenge and compete with other finalists nationwide for \$750,000 in prizes.

“I am pleased to see so many California adult education providers receive national recognition for programs that focus on pre-apprenticeships,” said Thurmond. “The California Department of Education (CDE) directly oversees adult education schools that have approximately 800,000 students. This is a place where we can make a direct contribution to the state’s economic recovery and provide meaningful skills that can be utilized immediately in a job setting. These programs benefit not only the individual but also their families and are an important step in lifting up disadvantaged communities.”

Many adults miss out on opportunities because they are not aware of apprenticeship programs, Thurmond noted, or don’t have the necessary support to prepare for or gain entry to them. The [CDE Adult Education Unit](#) oversees services for adults that are immigrants, disabled, low-income, homeless, incarcerated, and/or single parents. Adult schools offer free or low-cost classes for adults age eighteen and older. Students can earn a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate, learn about jobs, learn to speak English, and learn how to become a U.S. citizen.

The following providers and programs were recognized:

- [Charles A. Jones Career and Education Center \(CAJ\)](#)  is being recognized for plans to build up its [current pre-apprenticeship in manufacturing program](#)  and expand that into an Integrated Education Training model open to ESL and academic students without a high school diploma, with a strong focus on student interest. The CAJ partners with [Sacramento](#)

Valley Manufacturing Alliance and the CA Mobility Center (CMC), established as a technology and policy-driven hub for mobility innovations in Sacramento.

- Los Angeles Southwest College/LA Community College District is being recognized for the HireLAX Program, which provides local residents access to enroll in a comprehensive construction apprenticeship preparation program offered by community partners. Upon completion, program graduates are competitively positioned for placement consideration on a Los Angeles World Airport construction project through its contractors and local craft unions.
- Mt. San Antonio College is being recognized for its focus on health careers since these are among the strongest career paths and students can go right into credit programs, gain immediate employment, or achieve more intensive skills to enhance their career opportunities. Fields include emergency medical services—paramedic, fire technology, kinesiology, and mental health technology—psychiatric technician, and nursing.
- Oakland Adult and Career Education (OACE) is being recognized for its partnership with IT Biz Academy/Love Never Fails in creating an Integrated Education and Training curriculum that blends adult college and career readiness education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with IT technical content. Students will learn the fundamentals in cybersecurity and information systems, preparing them for paid IT internships and apprenticeship programs with city colleges of San Francisco, Affect the Youth, and a pending apprenticeship program at Merritt College.
- Proteus, Inc. is being recognized for a program that prepares students for an entry-level position in high-demand occupations of construction. These include employment with contractors, individual facilities, management companies, and other private or public agencies performing construction and energy and efficiency upgrades, including retrofitting on existing residential and commercial buildings. The program will target veterans, at-risk youth, farmworkers, and other disadvantaged populations of all genders in Fresno and Tulare counties.
- Roseville Adult School is being recognized for its Automotive Services Technician Pre-Apprenticeship Project that will prepare adult learners to seamlessly enter a Registered Apprenticeship Automotive Technician program in the Sacramento/Placer region, take post-secondary courses, or begin a career. The project helps participating students to develop short and long-term career planning goals and provides wraparound supports such as tutoring, literacy/numeracy skills, and case management that will include access to resources for child care, transportation, and beginning wages. Through agreements with industry partners like NAPA and Ford Motor Company, students will be able to test and attain industry-recognized automotive certifications prior to entering the Registered Apprenticeship program.
- Tamalpais Adult School is being recognized for its partnership with the successful North Bay TIP program to provide pre-apprenticeship opportunities in construction and the trades and expanding access to include English language learners.
- Vallejo City Unified School District-Regional Education Center is being recognized for a proposal to train and assist disadvantaged people to succeed in lifting themselves up through construction apprenticeship and union affiliation into highly sustainable careers. Included partnerships are with North Bay Trades Introduction Program (TIP), Construction Trades Workforce Initiative, Solano Workforce Development Board, and Napa Solano Building Trades. The proposal seeks to provide opportunities to English language learners who are

pursuing career opportunities in the construction trades with English language support, math support, and TIP pre-apprenticeship programs.

Submissions for the project were collected from September to November. During that time period, the U.S. Department of Education invited Adult Education Family Literacy Act grantees to submit proposals. The Rethink Adult Education Challenge received 203 proposals from programs across 44 states, Guam, and the District of Columbia. Proposed programs covered a range of industries—from manufacturing to healthcare to technology.

During Phase 2 of the challenge, from February to June 2021, the finalist teams will have access to a range of digital resources—such as case studies, activities, and webinars with subject matter experts—to help refine their program designs. Finalists will then be invited to submit more detailed program proposals. A judging panel will select a grand-prize winner that will receive \$250,000 and up to five runners-up that will receive at least \$100,000 each.

More information can be found on the [Rethink Adult Education](#) 🌐 website.

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Last Reviewed: Friday, February 26, 2021
