

## Executive Summary

### Career-Technical Education:

# Preparing college- and career-ready Ohioans to build economic vitality

Ohioans agree that the key to a long-term, sustainably healthy economy is a workforce that is educated, skilled, and prepared for current and future careers.

That describes the graduates of Ohio's career-technical education (CTE) system. An integrated, low-barrier system that starts with career education in the middle school and teaches advanced skills through the state's community college system, career-technical education is central to the health of Ohio's economy.

Though CTE has been consistently preparing young men and women for success in the workplace for fifty years, it has changed and adapted and become even more valuable. For example:

- Those "21st century skills" identified as essential for successful employees—the ability to think critically, problem-solving capability, skills to work in teams, among others—have long been a natural part of career-technical education, as small groups of students work together in career labs.
- More and more CTE high school graduates are going directly to post-secondary education; as many as 90% of graduates in some career centers.
- In shifting governance of adult workforce development programs from the Ohio Department of Education to the Board of Regents, Ohio has provided a smoother pathway between educational institutions providing career-technical education.

The Ohio career-technical education system includes:

- 91 career-technical planning districts (CTPDs), serving middle school and high school students. This includes 49 joint vocational school districts and 42 comprehensive/compact school districts.
- Adult workforce education centers, which provide post-secondary workforce education and training designed to serve the needs of the local labor and business market. These are located at the 91 CTPDs.
- The 23 public community and technical colleges located around the state.

Secondary CTE graduates are successful, typically entering the work force earlier and earning more than their counterparts from traditional school systems. Nearly 9 out of 10 community college graduates stay to work in Ohio, often in high demand fields such as health and engineering.

**Because career-technical education has a profound impact on hundreds of thousands of Ohioans annually as well as a long-term benefit to the state's economy, we must work to ensure that career-technical educators play a key role in making plans and decisions for Ohio's education system.**

**One example of a CTE student's path to a career**



As a junior from North Royalton in the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center Health Careers program last spring, Chelsea Tatro was accepted to be a student intern in the Respiratory Therapy Internship Program (RTIP) at the Cleveland Clinic. The application process was very difficult and competitive, requiring a GPA of at least 3.5, plus an essay and interview to be accepted.

"My experience as an intern for the Cleveland Clinic was both exciting and educational," said Chelsea. "This internship was an opportunity of a lifetime because not many students my age get to see what goes on in an emergency room, operating room, and a respiratory department all within nine weeks. I got to see things up close that college students don't get to see until they are third year residents."

During the paid, nine-week commitment, Chelsea also had to complete her research placement and project, document presentation of her research, present her project and tape her presentation.

