Preparing a **Green + Blue** Workforce

February 7–8, 2024
Washington, D.C.

EVENT SUMMARY
Dear Colleague,

Please join Education Development Center (EDC) in responding to a rapidly escalating workforce crisis that the U.S. faces. In this Event Summary, we spotlight the 2024 national convening, “Preparing a Green and Blue Workforce,” that we led to address this crisis.

If you were a convening presenter or a participant: Thank you for the vital expertise and insights that you shared. Moving forward, we will need you as our partners in developing and rolling out action plans and resources.

If you are new to the convening and our work in this space, please reach out to me. We need you as a partner, too. It is only through comprehensive, cross-sector, collaborative action that we will be able to ensure all U.S. youth and adults have the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in green and blue economies.

Sincerely,
Andrés Henríquez (ahenriquez@edc.org)
Director of STEM Education Strategy, US Division
The number of climate-related jobs is skyrocketing—yet U.S. K-20 education, training, and reskilling systems are not keeping pace with this transformation.
### Convening At-A-Glance

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**Speakers and Participants:** Economists, scientists, K-12 formal and informal education leaders, higher education leaders, youth climate action leaders, industry leaders, community leaders, government leaders, philanthropic leaders
Convening Objectives

- Identify essential skills and knowledge from STEM and other disciplines that youth need to thrive in green and blue economies.
- Engage cross-sector leaders in identifying opportunities and barriers to preparing youth for green and blue occupations.
- Identify strategies to ensure youth from historically marginalized communities gain the knowledge and skills needed to join and help build green and blue economies.
Next Steps

- **Commitments—Spring 2024:** Solicit Commitments to join EDC in collective action to strengthen systems to prepare a strong, inclusive green and blue workforce.

- **Connections—Spring 2024 and Beyond:** Continue to connect convening participants to begin to grow network and engage others.

- **Release Proceedings—Summer 2024:** Publish and promote convening findings to reach, inform, and spur action by key audiences.

- **Regional Action—Fall 2024:** Lead a series of regional convenings to identify local challenges and opportunities in preparing a green and blue workforce.

- **National Re-convening—February 2025:** Host second Annual National Convening with national and international experts.
Keynote: Preparing Our Workforce for the New Climate Economy

Four Key Questions

**SYSTEMS CHANGE**
How do we create skills for systems change, not just initiatives?

**EDUCATION SYSTEM**
How do we create an education system for the economic transition, not just re-skill?

**EQUITY**
How do we ensure that the transition to a new climate economy is just?

**MOMENTUM**
What kinds of coalitions do we need to create political momentum?
Opportunities and Challenges

“What is clear to me as I prepared for this is how much we need to be working together and how much we are not working together.”

—Ani Dasgupta, President and CEO, World Resources Institute

“The transition to blue and green jobs can result in temporary job displacement and economic disruption for communities reliant on traditional, carbon intensive jobs.”

—Nicole Smith, Research Professor and Chief Economist, Georgetown University

“Sustainability is an opportunity to think about things in innovative ways that open up new markets and new opportunities…not just for the privileged few, but for the majority of people on the planet.”

—Chris Boone, Professor, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University
Keynote: A New Green Learning Agenda for a Just Transition

Three Key Challenges

**CHALLENGE 1**
The Green Jobs Gap
Green jobs are currently stratified by gender and race.

**CHALLENGE 2**
The Green Skills Gap
Fields of study required by the most in-demand green jobs are not being pursued by underrepresented and underserved populations.

**CHALLENGE 3**
The Green Learning Opportunities Gap
Green learning opportunities are unequally distributed across communities.

Christina Kwauk
Founder / Co-Founder
Kwauk & Associates / Unbounded Alliance
Opportunities and Challenges

“One challenge and opportunity relates to the need for curricula that connects knowledge and action, again pointing to a role for education and competencies in sustainability.”
—Nicole Ardoin, Associate Professor, Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability

“We have another report looking at four different technologies, solar, wind, storage, and energy efficiency that predicts 1.6 million new jobs by 2030…”
—Elise DeGeorge, Project Leader, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

“Aligning strategies for a new green learning agenda that supports youth-led visions of the future isn’t just about coordinating across levels of actors and different policy mechanisms. It’s about ensuring our investments are supporting the narratives and the visions of the populations we seek to empower.”
—Christina Kwauk, Research Director, Unbounded Associates; Director, Kwauk & Associates
Commissioned Papers


Opportunities and Challenges

“We need to illuminate some of the bright spots here and figure out networks of people who can share them and figure out how are we going to spread it. And then those become existence proofs for pushing policy. We can't wait 20 years to do this. We must do it tomorrow.”

—Heidi Schweingruber, Director, Board on Science Education, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

“It’s so important to me that we talk about the climate crisis as a human-centered issue. There is so much emphasis on the science, which is so important, but it is also vital to understand that pollution is so intimate, and it is so ingrained in people’s lives, it is literally in people’s backyards.”

—Zanagee Artis, Founder and Executive Director, Zero Hour

“Between educators and employers, there’s a lack of clarity and definition about what green skills are…educators don't understand what the skills are that they're supposed to be training students for. It makes it very difficult for them to train those students.”

—Rachel Rosen, Senior Associate, Center for Effective Career and Technical Education, MDRC
Convening Poll Results: Participants Weigh In
When Should We Start Preparing People for the Green and Blue Economies?

- 20% High school
- 18% Elementary school
- 14% Community college
- 14% Middle school
- 13% Career and technical schools
- 10% College
- 10% On the job
Convening Poll Results: Participants Weigh In
What Skills are the Most Important for the Green and Blue Workforce?
Convening Poll Results: Participants Weigh In
What Are the Emerging Jobs Needed in the Green and Blue Economies?
Social Media Glimpse

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Sarah Sterling-Luddee - 2nd Senior Advisor Climate Change Education

My head and heart are so full after this event. There is much to be done. I am so thankful for the smart and talented people that came together this week to explore how we might activate our networks to move us in the direction of a cohesive, inclusive, HOPEful future for all people and our planet. Let’s do this!

What is a green job?

And who gets to have one?

Frank Niepold - 2nd Senior Climate Education and Workforce Progr...

On February 7-8, 2023, EDC (Education Development Center) will convene economists, scientists, K-12 formal and informal education leaders, industry leaders, community leaders, government leaders, and philanthropic leaders to identify strategies to ensure all U.S. youth are ready to thrive in green and blue economies.

#climatechange has created an urgent need to prepare our current and future U.S. workforce for careers that reduce environmental risks, safeguard the environment, and promote climate resilience. Yet, #EDC education, #workforce training, and workforce #skeilling systems are not keeping pace with this need.

Check out the agenda.
Thanks to Our Advisors

Svetlana Darche
Senior Research Associate
WestEd

Taj Eldridge
Managing Director
Climate Innovation
Jobs for the Future

Joyce Malyn-Smith
Director of Strategic Initiatives
in Workforce and Development, EDC

Frank Niepold
Senior Climate Education and Workforce Program Manager and Coordinator, NOAA
Thanks to Our Speakers and Panelists

Nicole Ardoin
Associate Professor
Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability

Michelle Armstrong
Head of Philanthropy and Executive Director
Ares Charitable Foundation

Zanagee Artis
Founder and Executive Director
Zero Hour

Sarah Bodor
Senior Director of Capacity Building
North American Association for Environmental Education

Christopher Boone
Professor
School of Sustainability
Arizona State University

Crystal Bridgeman
Senior Director
Workforce Development Program
Siemens Foundation

Jeffrey Chetirko
Senior Advisor of High School Innovation
NYC Public Schools

Janet Coffey
Program Director
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Haley Crim
Climate Engagement and Capacity-Building Coordinator
NOAA

Patti Curtis
Senior STEM Advisor
U.S. Department of Education

Cyane Dandridge
Executive Director
Strategic Energy Innovations

Ani Dasgupta
President and CEO
World Resources Institute
Thanks to Our Speakers and Panelists

Elise DeGeorge  
Project Leader  
National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Alessandra DiGiusto  
Executive Director and Head of CSR Americas  
Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation

Taj Eldridge  
Managing Director  
Climate Innovations Jobs for the Future

Adriana Embus Figueroa  
Investor  
Include Ventures

Maya Goodwin  
Senior Advisor Workforce and Economic Opportunity Policy  
Department of Energy

Andres Hernandez  
Director of STEM Education Strategy, US Division EDC

Christina Kwauk  
Research Director  
Unbounded Associates  
Director Kwauk & Associates

Josephine Louie  
Principal Research Scientist  
EDC

Cecilia Martinez  
Chief, Environmental and Climate Justice  
Bezos Earth Fund

Elsa Mengistu  
Director of Programming  
Black Girl Environmentalist

Frank Niepold  
Senior Climate Education and Workforce Program Manager and Coordinator  
NOAA

Carol O’Donnell  
Senior Executive  
Smithsonian Science Education Center

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Thanks to Our Speakers and Panelists

Sarita Pillai
Vice President and Chief Equity Officer
EDC

Kevin Rabinovitch
Global Vice President of Sustainability and Chief Climate Officer
Mars, Incorporated

Stephanie Rodriguez
Senior Workforce Fellow
U.S. Department of Labor

Rachel Rosen
Senior Associate Center for Effective Career and Technical Education
MDRC

Lillian Roth
Manager of Research and Practice JobsFirstNYC

Melanie Sany
Director
Our World Our Work EDC

Asli Sezen-Barrie
Program Director
National Science Foundation

Heidi Schweingruber
Director, Board on Science Education, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine

Nicole Smith
Research Professor and Chief Economist, Center for Education and Workforce
Georgetown University

Liesbet Steer
President & CEO
EDC

Sarah Sterling-Laldee
Senior Advisor Climate Change Education
New Jersey Department of Education

Kristen Wegner-Guilfoyle
Project Leader, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Kenzie Winslow
Climate Corps Fellow
Strategic Energy Innovations

Rachel Zuckerman
Special Advisor for Implementation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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For more information
Visit: greenblueworkforce.edc.org
Contact: ahenriquez@edc.org