



Preparing a **Green** + **Blue** Workforce

February 7–8, 2024
Washington, D.C.

EVENT SUMMARY



**Skills for a
Green Future**

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

40

Speakers



95

Registered



4

Sponsors



20

States



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

Ani Dasgupta
President and CEO
World Resources Institute



— 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

Christina Kwauk
Founder / Co-Founder
Kwauk & Associates /
Unbounded Alliance



+ 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.

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


Building a Workforce for the Future: Sustainability, Green, and Blue Jobs. (2024, February). By Arun Agrawal, Nicole Ardoin, & Chris Boone. White paper for the EDC Convening: Preparing a Green and Blue Workforce. Waltham, MA: EDC.

Career and Technical Education and Training for Jobs in the Green Economy: An Overview of Current Policies and Programs. (2024, February). By Rachel Rosen. White paper for the EDC Convening: Preparing a Green and Blue Workforce. Waltham, MA: EDC.

Preparing a **Green**
+ **Blue** Workforce

Building a Workforce for the Future: Sustainability, Green, and Blue Jobs
A white paper prepared for the EDC Convening: Preparing a Green and Blue Workforce

Arun Agrawal, School for Environment and Sustainability, University of Michigan
Nicole M. Ardoin, Doerr School of Sustainability, Stanford University
Christopher Boone, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University



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Career and Technical Education and Training for Jobs in the Green Economy: An Overview of Current Policies and Programs
Rachel Rosen: Director, Center for Effective Career and Technical Education, MDRC



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Opportunities and Challenges

“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

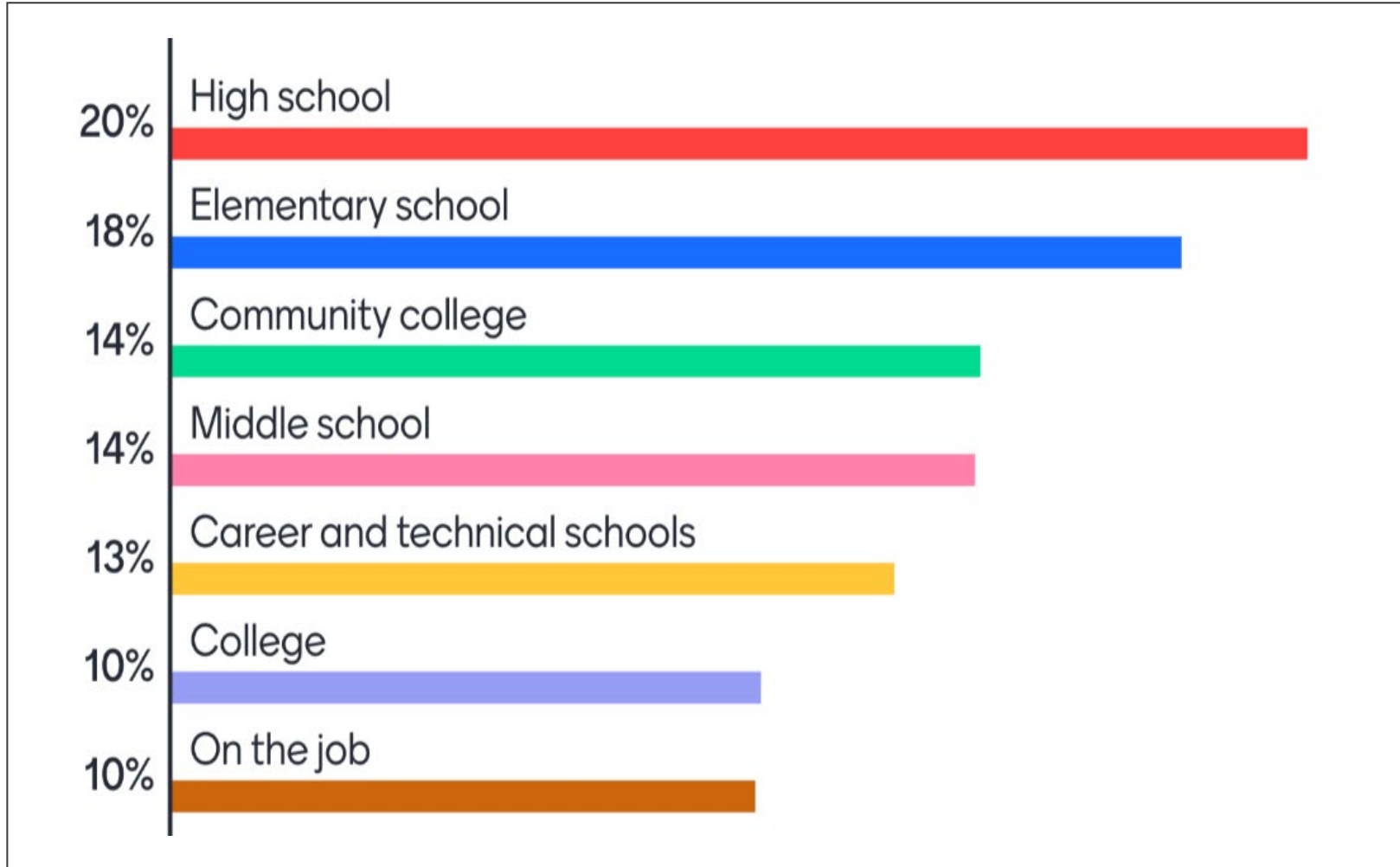
“We need to illuminate some of the bright spots here and figure out networks of people who can share them and figure out how are we going to spread it. And then those become existence proofs for pushing policy. We can't wait 20 years to do this. We must do it tomorrow.”

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

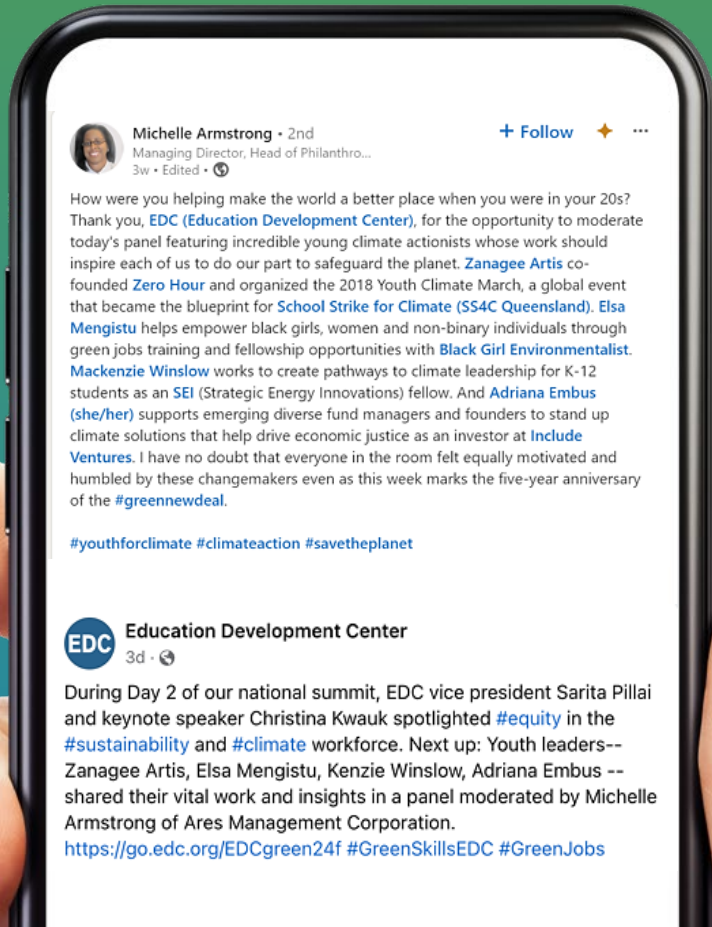
“It's so important to me that we talk about the climate crisis as a human-centered issue. There is so much emphasis on the science, which is so important, but it is also vital to understand that pollution is so intimate, and it is so ingrained in people's lives, it is literally in people's backyards.”

—Zanagee Artis, Founder and Executive Director, Zero Hour

Convening Poll Results: Participants Weigh In When Should We Start Preparing People for the Green and Blue Economies?



Social Media Glimpse



Sarah Sterling-Laldee · 2nd
Senior Advisor, Climate Change Education
Reposted from Shelley Pasnik · 3w · 🌐

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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 Progra...
1w · Edited · 🌐

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On February 7–8, 2024, **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 change 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 **#k12** education, **#workforce** training, and workforce **#reskilling** systems are not keeping pace with this need.

Check out the agenda.

Carol O'Donnell · 2nd
Senior Executive, Director, Smithsonian Science ...
20h · 🌐

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At this week's EDC convening, I was honored to share the results from the **Smithsonian Science Education Center (SSEC)** and Gallup's global report: "Educating for Sustainable Development" <https://lnkd.in/edfVWews>. We are working together across sectors to prepare our youth for the future **#greeneconomy** and **#blueeconomy**, and to help all young people live "Life on a Sustainable Planet" <https://science.si.edu>. **#sdgs #STEM4SG**



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Thanks to Our Advisors



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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
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Sarah Bodor
Senior Director of
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Ani Dasgupta
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Thanks to Our Speakers and Panelists



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Andres Hernandez
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Christina Kwauk
Research Director
Unbounded Associates
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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

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
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Lillian Roth

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Asli Sezen-Barrie

Program Director
National Science Foundation



Heidi Schweingruber

Director, Board on Science
Education, The National
Academies of Sciences,
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Nicole Smith

Research Professor and
Chief Economist, Center for
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Georgetown University



Liesbet Steer

President & CEO
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Sarah Sterling-Laldee

Senior Advisor
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Rachel Zuckerman

Special Advisor for
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Thanks to Our Team



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EXIT

Green
Workforce

Strategies for U.S. Youth to Thrive in Green and Blue Economies

Agenda +

- 9:00-9:45 a.m.
Welcome and Overview
- 9:45-10:40 a.m.
Panel 1: Future Jobs & Skills for the
Green and Blue Economies
- 10:40-10:50 a.m.
Break
- 10:50-11:45 a.m.
Panel 2: Industry Perspectives
- 11:45-12:30 p.m.
Facilitated Discussions: Finding
Common Language
- 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Lunch
- 1:30-2:25 p.m.
Panel 3: Climate Change and
Education: What Do the Data Show?
- 2:25-2:30 p.m.
Break
- 2:30-3:30 p.m.
Panel 4: Education and Career
Pathways
- 3:30-4:15 p.m.
Breakout Discussions: Education
Partnerships and Equity
- 4:15-4:30 p.m.
Reflections on Day 1



For more information

Visit: greenblueworkforce.edc.org

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**Skills for a
Green Future**