Champions

Accenture: "At Accenture, our skill-based approach to hiring helps us reach previously untapped talent pools that reflect the rich diversity of our clients and communities. Through the Apprenticeship Program, our learn-and-earn model connects people without four-year degrees to new career pathways in tech, and we share our success with other companies in the Apprenticeship Network. We’re excited to further our impact on creating a more inclusive workforce and fuel our national competitiveness with the Tear the Paper Ceiling campaign."

– Kate Clifford, Chief Human Resources Officer of North America, Accenture

Chevron: “Our partnerships and investments in workforce development and career training will advance and strengthen communities. Chevron is committed to ‘tearing the paper ceiling’ through multiple diversity initiatives, including a commitment to inclusive hiring. Chevron brings industry-wide focus to D&I by leveraging scale and strategic partnerships to drive greater impact. Through our collaboration with Opportunity@Work, we seek to inspire companies to embrace alternative hiring routes for workers who are Skilled Through Alternative Routes (*STARs*). The Paper Ceiling Campaign seeks to eliminate hiring barriers by shifting the focus to on-the-job learning, or work experience, as an alternative route to build valuable skills. A workforce armed with the skills necessary to succeed in the jobs of tomorrow is important not only to the success of our business, but also to America’s ability to compete in the global marketplace.”

– Rhonda Morris, Vice President, and Chief Human Resource Officer, Chevron

Google: “Google believes everyone deserves the opportunity to reach their full economic potential, without limitation based on education level. Through our Google Career Certificates program, we’re providing accessible workforce training for well-paying jobs. And we’ve created an Employer Consortium of over 150 companies—including Google—that helps program graduates connect with these jobs. We’re proud to support Opportunity@Work and to further our shared goal of creating a more inclusive economy.”

– Lisa Gevelber, Founder, Grow with Google

Jobcase: We built Jobcase to empower workers. We won’t truly achieve this mission, unless the Paper Ceiling that our friends at Opportunity@Work have spotlighted is ripped open. Supporting STARS success isn’t just aligned with Jobcase’s philosophy, it is literally a definition of our business, services, and mission. We are proud to join forces to accelerate change because when STAR workers are truly empowered, everyone benefits. This is not just the right thing to do, it is an imperatively critical thing to do if our country is to remain the economic leader and the beacon for economic opportunity that we all aspire to be.

– Fred Goff, CEO and Founder, Jobcase
LinkedIn: “For far too long, the way people got hired was based solely on the job they had, the degree they earned, or the people they knew. That’s starting to change - and we see it happening on LinkedIn. Employers are realizing that by shifting focus to the actual skills a worker brings to the table, they can solve some of their biggest business challenges and unlock opportunities for millions of overlooked, qualified candidates. In today's turbulent economic times, the need for new ways of thinking has never been more urgent. LinkedIn is proud to stand with Opportunity@Work to play a role in tearing down the ‘paper ceiling,’ so that we can create a more equitable and inclusive workforce for all.”
– Aneesh Raman, Vice President, Head of Opportunity Project, LinkedIn

McKinsey & Company: “Filling most in-demand jobs today – and tomorrow – will require a fundamentally different approach to finding the potential in talent, rather than screening resumes for a particular pedigree. What employers really need is knowledge, skills, and capacity to learn. We are making significant investments at McKinsey to ensure that our own talent culture is both distinctive and inclusive. To create opportunities for a broader range of talent, we are reaching out to new sources, like coding bootcamps and apprenticeship programs, and adapting our process to include game-based assessments and interview guides that rely less on business jargon and case prep. We are also proud to help tear the ‘Paper Ceiling’ by building data-driven tools that will help employers of all kinds make potential the priority and rethink what it means to be a skilled worker.”
– Katy George, Senior Partner Chief People Officer, McKinsey & Company

Walmart: “Creating paths of opportunity for everyone depends on a skills-based approach to hiring and advancing workers. Opportunity@Work and the Ad Council’s Tear the Paper Ceiling campaign highlights the enormous unrealized potential for workers, employers and our economy that will come from reorienting our workforce systems toward skills rather than the way skills have been acquired. We are excited to build on our work with Opportunity@Work and others since we began our Retail Opportunity initiative in 2015 to drive change in the workforce system through our business and philanthropy.”
– Kathleen McLaughlin, Executive Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer, Walmart, and President of the Walmart Foundation

Workday: “At Workday, we believe that skills are a central currency in the changing world of work and a pathway to a more equitable economic future for all. Be it through the way we think about talent, the way we innovate, or via our policy advocacy efforts, we are committed to creating opportunities for all and helping workers get skilled through alternative routes. We are honored to support Opportunity@Work and their Tear the Paper Ceiling campaign.”
– Carrie Varoquiers, Chief Philanthropy Officer, Workday

Allies

College Board: “There is so much untapped talent in this country – including many remarkable young people who don’t have four-year degrees. Through BigFuture, we are privileged to dialogue with millions of high school students every year about pathways to success in the workforce. We are proud to collaborate with Opportunity@Work and others so that all students can build a big future, even if they don’t earn a four-year degree.”
– David Coleman, CEO, College Board
Comcast NBCUniversal: All Americans should have the opportunity to fully participate and excel in our dynamic economy. We’re proud to partner with Opportunity@Work so that more skilled workers can access competitive wage-earning jobs through alternative pathways.”
– Dalila Wilson-Scott, EVP and Chief Diversity Officer and President, Comcast Corporation

Guild: “Workers today are seeking greater opportunity and career mobility from their employers. Right now, far too many are held back from reaching their full potential because of systems and barriers that prevent them from advancing. At Guild, we are focused on meeting workers where they are in their educational and career journeys, and helping talent rise wherever it’s found. The Paper Ceiling campaign is critical in doing just that for STARs, and we are proud to be a part of this movement.”
– Rachel Romer, CEO & Co-Founder, Guild

IBM: “Outdated and narrow views of credentials are causing otherwise innovative companies to miss out on hiring top talent like STARs. In partnership with Opportunity@Work and the Ad Council, there is an opportunity to create an inclusive future of work. At IBM, we have adopted a skills-first approach through free education programs like IBM SkillsBuild and by removing the four-year degree requirement for 50% of our U.S. job listings. We’re excited to build on this success through our partnership, and we encourage other companies to join us.”
– Jonathan Adashek, Chief Communications Officer and Senior Vice President, Marketing and Communications, IBM

Strada Education Network: "Even at this moment in which there is an extraordinary gap in the labor market between demand and supply, employers too often miss out on talented job candidates due to rigid degree requirements, while also unwittingly constraining opportunity for millions of individuals. Education after high school represents a vital pathway to a prosperous future. Yet we also believe that employers should value the skills people bring to the table regardless of where they acquired them. We’re proud to support the Opportunity@Work STAR campaign, which has the potential to create opportunities for millions of talented STARs across America.”
– Stephen Moret, President and CEO, Strada Education Network

Supporters:

General Assembly: “General Assembly was founded on the belief that a successful career isn’t predicated on whether you have a college degree, as evidenced by the thousands of STARs students who have taken our courses and secured coveted jobs in tech. It’s high time for employers to embrace skills-based hiring - not just to discover great talent in this incredibly tight labor market - but more importantly, to level the playing field for all candidates who have the ability and drive to thrive.”
– Lisa Lewin, CEO, General Assembly

Hire Heroes USA: “We at Hire Heroes USA are proud to participate in the Opportunity@Work, ‘Tear the Paper Ceiling’ campaign. We serve thousands of veterans and military spouses a year that are skilled through alternative pathways. We know how vital it is that these skills gained through military service are met with equitable job opportunities. Employers prosper, families thrive and qualified job candidates are provided the ability to utilize their valuable skills. Alongside the Ad Council and other non-profit
organizations, we hope to change the narrative, raise awareness and encourage skills-based hiring.”
– Ross Dickman, Chief Operating Officer, Hire Heroes USA

**JFF:** “The Paper Ceiling campaign is a critical component of efforts to expand learning opportunities beyond the traditional degree. To drive transformation in the American workforce and education systems, we need an array of high-quality options for economic advancement. JFF looks forward to supporting the campaign by enabling workers to find high-quality learning pathways and ensuring their recognition in employer talent practices.”
– Maria Flynn, CEO and President, JFF

**Merit America:** “The sad truth is, when you filter candidates based on college degrees, you’re closing out the vast majority of Black and Latinx talent in the country. That’s why we focus on expanding pathways to family-sustaining careers for learners without college degrees. At Merit America, we proudly hire based on skill, and firmly believe that our success is rooted in the strength of this talent. We will continue to lead by example, and push other employers to harness the magic of STARs.”
– Rebecca Taber Staehelin, Co-Founder Co-CEO, Merit America

**Multiverse:** “For too long, incredibly talented individuals have been excluded from some of the best jobs simply because they don’t have a degree. Creating more pathways for STARs to succeed is core to our mission at Multiverse and we couldn’t be prouder to join Opportunity@Work in support of the Tear the Paper Ceiling Campaign. STARs have the ability to massively transform our workforce for the better, and we’re excited to continue to provide great opportunities to STARs through tech apprenticeships at top companies globally.”
– Sophie Ruddock, VP and GM, Multiverse North America

**National Skills Coalition:** “We are thrilled to be a part of this campaign, bringing visibility to the value that skills-based hiring and alternative training routes, like high quality, non-degree credentials bring to our economy. It also adds a critical call to action to the work NSC is doing to ensure that working people receive the support services, academic support, and career advising they need to succeed and to make the outcomes of education and workforce training programs transparent.”
– Andy Van Kleunen, National Skills Coalition, CEO and Founder

**New Profit:** "The narrative about a ‘skills gap’ is deeply entrenched in the way we think about the workforce. But the problem isn’t a lack of skilled workers. According to research from Opportunity@Work, 70+ million Americans without degrees have the skills to perform higher-wage work. The problem we need to solve is really an opportunity gap. We need to create a new system of opportunity that connects under-valued workers to higher wage work — looking beyond four-year degrees to promote career advancement through alternative forms of education and training as well as direct, on-the-job work experience. New Profit invests in social innovators who work to address the opportunity gap and change the way talent is valued, understanding that people acquire skills in a number of ways. We’re proud to bring our coalition to the table in support of this campaign to tear down the paper ceiling and transform economic mobility in America."
– Abby Marquand, Partner, Economic Mobility, New Profit
Per Scholas: “We have seen significant hiring challenges in the tech industry. The answer is not to keep looking for talent in the same places, but to consider alternative routes to hiring outstanding talent. At Per Scholas, our graduates are the real STARs. What makes these talented and determined individuals so special is an incredible diversity of backgrounds and perspectives: more than 85% of Per Scholas learners are people of color and over one-third are women. We know that talent is ubiquitous, but opportunity is not. Now is the time to learn more about how STARs can help you transform your business for the better.”

– Plinio Ayala, President and Chief Executive Officer, Per Scholas

SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management): “SHRM is excited to join these forward-looking organizations in building partnerships to tap the talent pool of 70 million people in the U.S. who may have been overlooked for not having specific work experience, or a degree, but have the skilled credentials needed to do the job. As HR continues to evolve, we have to adapt to today’s landscape and support those talented individuals who may not have built skills in a conventional way but have the competencies they need to succeed. Those HR departments who are invested in this approach will not only provide an opportunity for employees but a greater talent pool for employers which will only improve workplace diversity.”

– Alex Alonso, Ph.D., SHRM-SCP, Chief Knowledge Officer, SHRM

SkillUp Coalition: ”At SkillUp, understanding worker voice is paramount and undergirds one of our core principles, "Be About the Worker". And here’s what workers (STARs) are telling us. Most continue to face self doubt and lack of confidence. Most have confronted the barriers to hiring and advancement - often hidden but real - that's endemic merely because of who they are, rather than the skills they possess. That's why the "paper ceiling" is so crucial. It cuts through the silence, the barriers, and yes, sometimes the hypocrisy that employers contribute to, but more importantly, that workers feel. It lays bare the dissonance between STARs and employers, and from that stark crucible, lifts up a message of opportunity and hope, on both sides of the marketplace. For employers, it showcases what they're missing out on: amazing, skilled candidates that fill a business need. And for STARs, it acts as a motivational propellant, knowing that employers will be true to their word gives STARs confidence, more importantly hope; it lets them "doubt their own self doubt". It opens up the spigot of opportunity that’s real, unencumbered, viable. That's what makes the "paper ceiling" so transformative. SkillUp is proud to partner with Opportunity@Work in this vital effort to transform lives, and the lives of future generations.”

– Steve Lee, Executive Director, SkillUp Coalition

SkyHive: “SkyHive’s vision is to reskill the world and we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Opportunity@Work to bring economic equality to all. Our data shows us that all workers and learners, regardless of background, have a rich set of skills that are in high demand by employers, and we will continue to develop leading-edge, ethical artificial intelligence to help workers and employers uncover and match those skills to opportunity. We are proud to partner with Opportunity@Work to help STARs find meaningful and rewarding career pathways and pursue purpose in their working lives.”

– Sean Hinton, CEO & Founder, SkyHive

WorkingNation: “While a four-year college degree can signal knowledge in a certain field, it isn’t the only way to acquire that knowledge. Making a bachelor’s degree a requirement for a higher-paying, family-sustaining job shuts out more than half the workforce, people who have acquired just as much knowledge and skills through work experience, military service, community college, or some combination
of these alternate career pathways. With nearly eleven million open jobs in this country, it is time to eliminate this artificial barrier – the four-year degree – as a requirement for a good job and put these talented STARs to work.”

– Art Bilger, Founder and CEO, WorkingNation