



EFFECTIVE POLICY • MEANINGFUL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING  
SMART PARTNERSHIPS • IMPACTFUL PROMOTION • STRONG PROCESSES



# 2018

ANNUAL REPORT

## ABOUT ADVANCE CTE

Advance CTE: State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work is the longest-standing national non-profit that represents State Directors and state leaders responsible for secondary, postsecondary and adult Career Technical Education (CTE) across all 50 states and U.S. territories. Advance CTE's **mission** is to support visionary state leadership, cultivate best practices, and speak with a collective voice to advance high-quality CTE policies, programs and pathways that ensure career success for each learner.

Advance CTE's **vision** is to transform and expand CTE so that each learner — of any background, age and zip code — is prepared for career and college success through state leadership, advocacy and partnerships.

The Center to Advance CTE is Advance CTE's 501(c)3 affiliate organization. The Center has a shared vision with Advance CTE and a mission to support and promote a positive environment in which high-quality CTE policies, programs and practices can be developed, nurtured and sustained by:

- Amplifying the successes of and lessons learned by state CTE leaders;
- Cultivating critical partners and perspectives;
- Promoting and facilitating innovation; and
- Expanding capacity across the CTE community.

## DEAR ADVANCE CTE MEMBERS, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS:

When we look back at 2018, we see much of which we can be proud — successfully lobbying to pass the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) and to increase funding, deepening our commitment to equity, and expanding the impact and reach of our work in state policy and communications. Our membership grew to an all-time high of more than 500 CTE leaders representing all 50 states, five territories and the District of Columbia.

This report is aligned with our new 2018-21 strategic plan and is organized around the following priorities that guide our work: Effective Policy, Impactful Promotion, Meaningful Professional Learning, Smart Partnerships and Strong Processes.

We are excited and energized by the work that lies ahead and are looking forward to collaborating with our members, partners, funders and friends to improve equity and access to high-quality CTE for every learner. Your support helps make our work possible. Here's to another strong year together!

Austin Estes

Katie Fitzgerald

Kimberly Green

Meredith Hills

Nicole Howard

Shannon Johnson

Kate Blosveren Kreamer

Brianna McCain

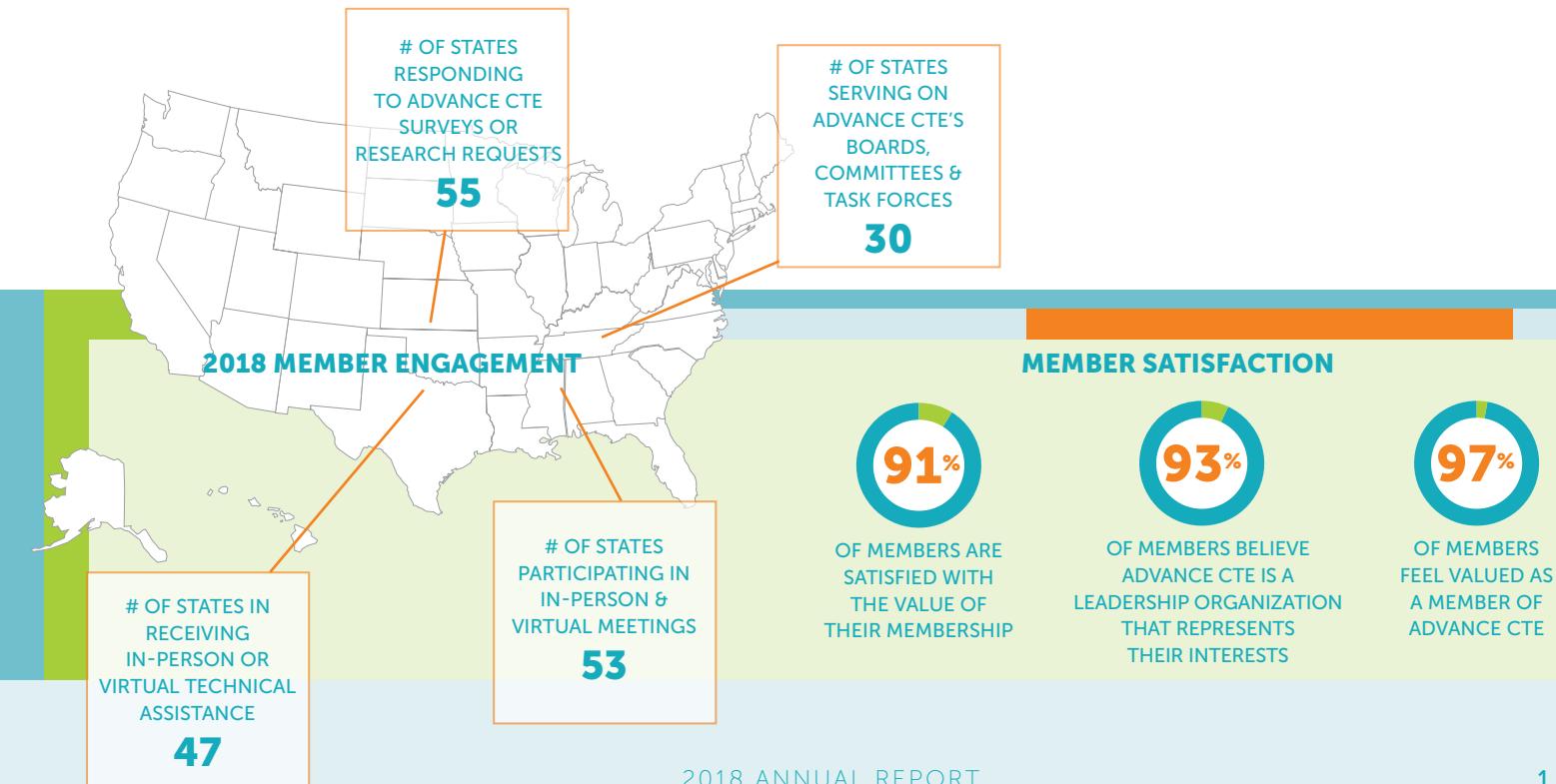
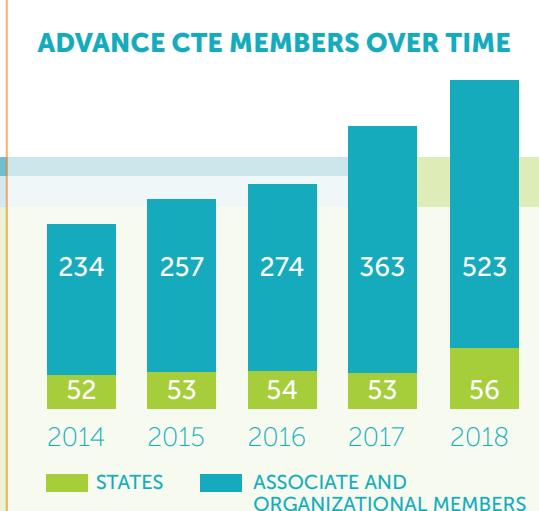
Ashley McFadden

Kathryn Zekus

Andrea Zimmermann

## ADVANCE CTE MEMBERS

Our members guide and drive our work and are the very foundation of Advance CTE. In 2018, our positioning as a leader in the field helped our membership grow by **39 percent** to an all-time high of 579 members.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Ensure the adoption and implementation of high-quality state and federal CTE policy



### SUSTAINING STATE POLICY TRANSFORMATION

Now in its fifth year, Advance CTE's advocacy and commitment to supporting high-quality state CTE policy expanded and deepened in 2018. Through the New Skills for Youth initiative, funded by JPMorgan Chase & Co., we continued to support states' transformation of their career readiness systems as they shifted from policy design to implementation and developed strategies to ensure sustainability.



In 2018, Advance CTE, led and affirmed by our Board of Directors, committed to supporting states as they identify and dismantle historical barriers and construct systems that help each learner to access, feel welcome and fully participate in, and successfully complete a high-quality CTE program of study.

Within the first year of the equity initiative, Advance CTE:

- Established a Board-approved Statement on Equity to ground and guide our work;
- Convened representatives from **20** national civil rights and CTE organizations to serve on our Committee on Equity;
- Recruited a diverse array of members from **14 states**, representing secondary and postsecondary CTE and equity leaders, to serve on our "kitchen cabinet"; and
- Released the first two reports in a multi-year series that explores CTE's equity challenges and solutions.

This work requires diligence, persistence and commitment. Only through such an intentional focus on equity will states be able to truly put learner success first.

## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2019, Advance CTE will continue to lead a robust research agenda to expand our equity initiative; deepen our postsecondary expertise; conduct research around credit for prior learning policies; and develop a Policy Benchmark Tool focused on early postsecondary options. Our ongoing commitment to defining and illustrating aspects of high-quality state policy and implementation will be supported through vetted policies and resources in the Learning that Works Resource Center, as well as technical assistance to states. We will also release our next 50-state scan exploring CTE data systems.

### DEEPENING OUR POSTSECONDARY EXPERTISE

In 2018, Advance CTE continued our focus on postsecondary CTE across state and federal policy. With support from the Joyce Foundation, we began supporting state leaders in Colorado and Illinois as they evaluated and transformed their postsecondary CTE program approval policies using Advance CTE's Policy Benchmark Tool to improve program quality and learner outcomes.

As part of our commitment to expanding our postsecondary CTE expertise, we:

- Published our first postsecondary-only resource, Driving Quality in Postsecondary CTE;
- Added six new postsecondary-focused profiles to the Learning that Works Resource Center;
- Produced new fact sheets about postsecondary CTE; and
- Updated our recommendations for reauthorizing the Higher Education Act (HEA).



### In-State Technical Assistance

Advance CTE deepened our technical assistance capabilities in 2018 through a four-tier model that ranges from short-term virtual support to intensive, in-state consulting. This year, our technical assistance support grew dramatically as our federal policy work shifted to helping states as they began to implement the new Perkins V law. As such, **47 states** received assistance, with several receiving our most intensive tier of support.

One example of this more intensive work is the support Advance CTE provided Vermont to help state leaders develop a new strategic vision and goals for CTE, a process that included developing a statewide stakeholder survey and convening more than 40 key leaders.

## BY THE NUMBERS—STATE POLICY

Advance CTE released

**22**

state policy reports and tools on topics such as developing effective career advising systems, expanding CTE to reach the middle grades and transforming low-quality CTE programs.

The Learning that Works Resource Center, a repository of CTE policy, research and publications, received **132,666** page views,

**35%**

increase from the prior year, and added **89** Advance CTE and partner resources to the database.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Ensure the adoption and implementation of high-quality state and federal CTE policy

### STRENGTHENING FEDERAL POLICY

Advance CTE can trace our roots back to the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, which was the original federal investment in CTE. Since our founding in 1920, we have been strong advocates of CTE with our nation's leaders. Core to our mission is federal CTE advocacy that is developed and driven by our members and the field.

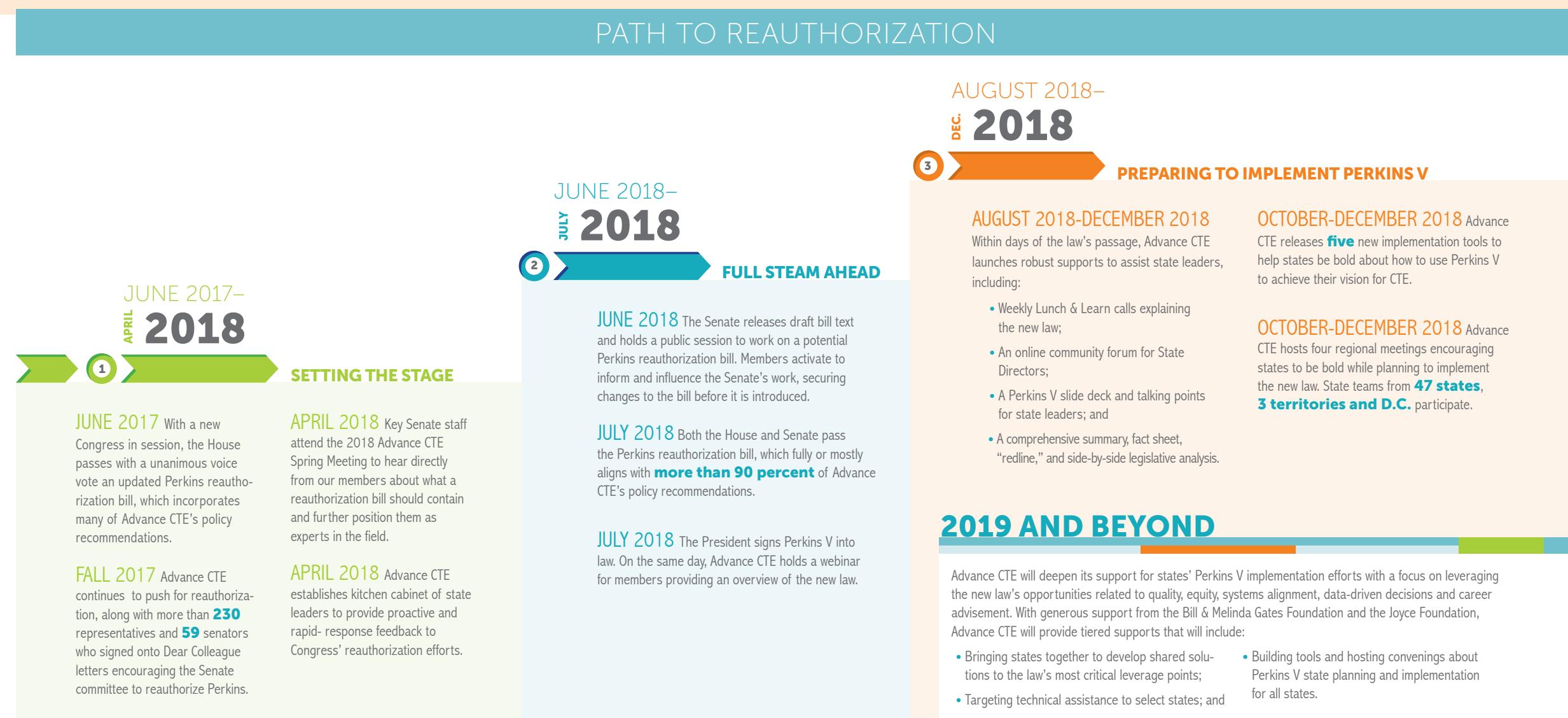
We are proud of our work in 2018 to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins IV), which was the culmination of more than a decade of advocacy and lobbying Congress. By building coalitions, coordinating on CTE caucus events on the Hill, and arranging for our members to meet with congressional staff, Advance CTE has developed strong relationships with congressional staff and positioned Advance CTE as the go-to expert on CTE and Perkins implementation.

The result — the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) — provides a critical update to this important federal law and empowers states with the flexibility to use Perkins as a tool to achieve their vision for high-quality CTE.

### LOOKING AHEAD

In 2019, Advance CTE will continue to represent state CTE leadership as Congress goes through the budget and appropriations process and takes up policy proposals such as apprenticeships and reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Additionally, we will actively engage with the federal government to its implementation of Perkins V meets legislative intent and does not create barriers for states to be creative and bold.

### PATH TO REAUTHORIZATION



### BY THE NUMBERS—FEDERAL POLICY

Advance CTE engaged **95** congressional offices throughout 2018 on topics ranging from Perkins reauthorization to apprenticeship to the reauthorization of HEA.

The House and Senate CTE caucuses grew by **10 percent** to include **150** members of Congress.

**35** State Directors participate in kitchen cabinets to support advocacy efforts for Perkins and HEA.

**40** states received federal policy technical assistance and engaged in Advance CTE's congressional advocacy efforts.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

### Raising the visibility and promotion of high-quality CTE

#### CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

2018 marked five years of Advance CTE's Excellence in Action award, an annual celebration to honor exemplary CTE programs of study across the nation. Over the past five years, we have awarded **48 high-quality programs of study from 15 Career Clusters® across 23 states.** In 2018, we honored 11 programs from nine states.

Our honorees model what excellence in action looks like with a true progression from secondary to postsecondary education; meaningful work-based learning opportunities; and substantial, evidence-based impact on student achievement and success. They have been featured at national conferences, at the White House, in congressional briefings and in major media outlets.

#### STRATEGIES FOR ATTRACTING STUDENTS TO HIGH-QUALITY CTE

Since 2016, Advance CTE has helped states improve their communications strategies to recruit students into CTE programs. This work, supported by the Siemens Foundation, expanded in 2018 as Advance CTE developed a training to empower school counselors with the information they need to promote CTE. In 2018, this initiative also funded work in Idaho, Colorado and North Dakota, and our staff helped **10 additional states** leverage this investment to embed evidence-based messages into their marketing efforts.

#### LOOKING AHEAD

In 2019, Advance CTE will launch a campaign to double the federal investment in CTE, isupportcte.org. This website will serve as the hub for the campaign, sharing facts and information about CTE, as well as capturing testimonials about its reach and impact. Importantly, this site will serve as the place where employers and other organizations can sign on to this effort. The signatures collected will be a critical component to build visibility and support for CTE among members of Congress and provide key momentum going into the appropriations cycle in 2020.

#### ADVANCE CTE'S DIGITAL REACH



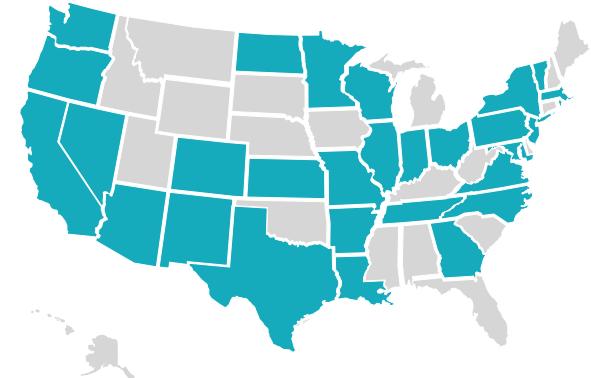
In 2018, Advance CTE's digital reach and impact continued to grow. In May, we debuted a popular new video, "CTE 101," which explains how today's CTE prepares learners for successful careers while closing the skills gap for employers. Examples of the impact of the video and our expanding digital reach include:

- To date, the "CTE 101" video has been viewed more than 11,000 times and had 22,000 impressions;
- Advance CTE gained more than 2,240 Twitter followers — a **46% increase — reaching a total of more than 7,033 social media supporters;** and
- Careertech.org had more than 470,000 users and 2.2 million page views.



#### ADVANCE CTE IN THE FIELD

As lead experts in CTE, our staff regularly present at meetings and conferences, serve on panels and advisory committees and provide in-state technical assistance. In 2018, our staff presented at **85 live and virtual events and visited 29 states and Washington, DC.**



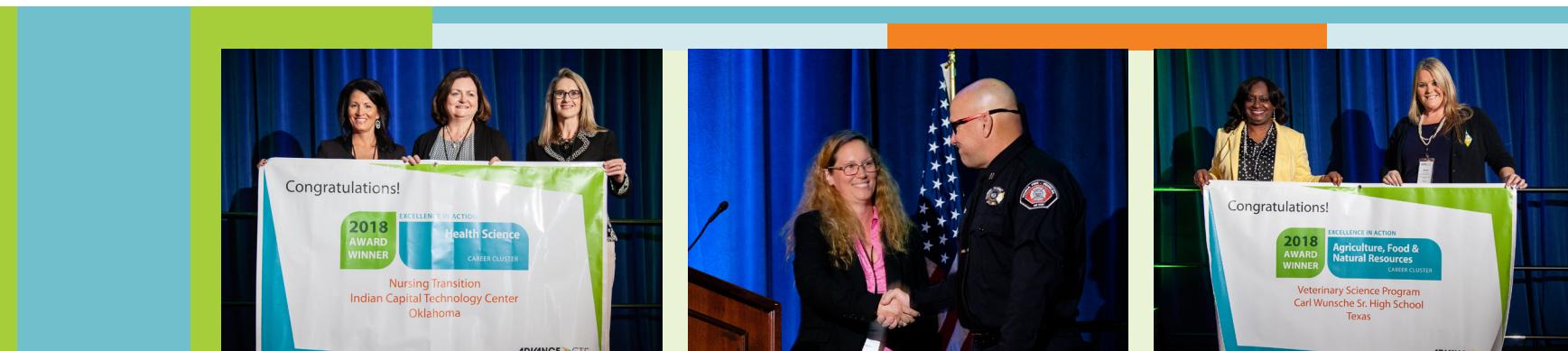
#### CTE VIRTUAL INSTITUTE

Advance CTE facilitated two cohorts of the CTE Virtual Institute, a web-based course designed to help education leaders get up to speed on all things related to CTE. A total of 23 participants from 16 states completed the program in 2018. To complete the program, each participant conducted a personal project to apply lessons learned from the institute and advocate for CTE in their own communities.

#### ADVANCE CTE IN THE NEWS

Advance CTE's positioning in the field grew stronger in 2018, as evidenced by the 70 articles and op-eds in a wide array of media outlets featuring our research, advocacy efforts, and Excellence in Action award winners, including:

- Bloomberg Government
- PBS NewsHour
- Education Dive
- Education Week
- Inside Higher Ed
- Hechinger Report
- National Public Radio
- The 74
- The Hill



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

### Empowering members through professional learning



#### SUPPORTING THE FUTURE OF CTE LEADERSHIP

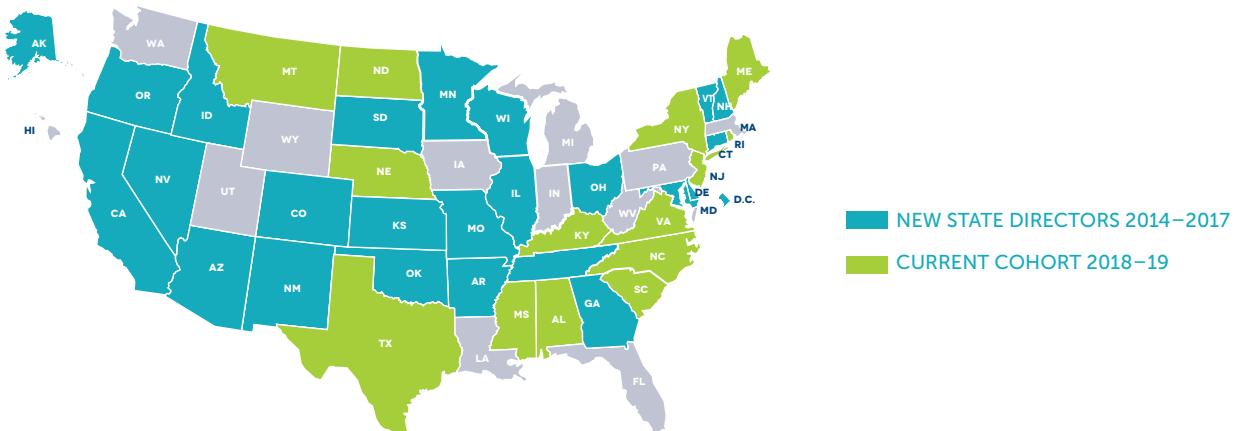
In 2018, our New State CTE Director Leadership Program welcomed its largest cohort since we began informally supporting new leaders four years ago. Since 2015, more than 85 percent of the states have experienced at least one CTE leadership change, underscoring the importance of this work and Advance CTE's investment in formal leadership development.

The program uses a cohort model to support new leaders by connecting them with mentors, holding monthly check-in calls and two in-person meetings, and providing a full curriculum designed to assist them as they develop and implement their vision for CTE.

#### CURRICULUM

- Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act
- CTE Programs of Study
- Employer and Stakeholder Engagement
- Data, Accountability and Evaluation
- Staffing and Management

#### NEW STATE DIRECTOR PROGRAM



#### LOOKING AHEAD

Advance CTE is a member-driven organization. In 2019, we will continue to leverage member-based "kitchen cabinets" to guide our work around equity, communications and Higher Education Act reauthorization. We will scale our new online communities and develop more virtual professional learning spaces through members-only webinars and regular brown bag calls for state leaders. Additionally, we will host an array of new in-person and virtual opportunities to support states' implementation of Perkins V through funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

#### MEETINGS & EVENTS

The cornerstone of Advance CTE's professional learning continues to be our in-person conferences. In 2018, our meetings attracted the largest number of participants to date with a **27 percent increase** in attendance over the prior year, when we had set the previous record. Combined, 440 participants representing **47 states, 2 territories and D.C.** attended our conferences.

In 2018, Advance CTE expanded our virtual professional learning by launching a new online platform to allow state leaders to share resources and engage in cross-state problem solving. We also hosted or co-hosted 14 public and members-only webinars, reaching more than **500 leaders** and advocates across the country on topics ranging from improving career advisement to strengthening rural CTE programs.

After Perkins V was signed into law, it was critical that our professional learning offerings expand rapidly to accommodate states' new and emerging needs as they began implementation. As such, we planned and executed four additional meetings within three months of the law's passage along with a number of virtual learning opportunities to meet states' needs in real time.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Building and maintaining strong and effective partnerships that advance our vision and mission

Partnerships are the current that runs through all of our work. In fact, without our partners, we would not be able to achieve our full impact and reach. In 2018, we worked with **55 high-value, high-impact partners**, who helped us promote and implement high-quality CTE policy and offer strong professional learning to the field.

Additionally, our leadership sits on the advisory boards of the American National Standards Institute; Consortium of States to Support the Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security Career Cluster; Manufacturing Skills Standards Council; National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity; and National Career Academy Coalition. Our staff and leadership also engage in multiple task forces and committees, such as the Aspen Institute's Prize for Community College Excellence, the Computer Science Business Advisory Council and the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences Advisory Board.

### Expanding Access to Youth Apprenticeship

Advance CTE was invited to be part of the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA), an initiative funded by Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ballmer Group, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Joyce Foundation, JPMorgan Chase & Co. and the Siemens Foundation. Advance CTE will work with the other PAYA coalition partners over the next four years to support efforts in states and cities to expand access to high-quality apprenticeship opportunities for high school-age youth.



## LOOKING AHEAD

Operating under a new three-year strategic plan, Advance CTE will continue its commitment to ensure an effective and efficient administrative infrastructure that supports our growth in grants, contracts and programming. By being good stewards of our finances and growing staff, we will explore new systems and technology to ensure productivity and quality, and continue to use data to drive our decision-making through regular internal and Board-led stocktakes.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Developing internal processes to ensure a strong and sustainable organization

Advance CTE is committed to ensuring that our organization has a solid fiscal and administrative foundation. In service of the work we do to support high-quality CTE in the field, we have increased our membership base, grown our overall budget and added new staff to expand our ability to carry out the strategic goals and initiatives established by our Board of Directors. We also have continued to diversify our funding streams thanks in part to growing support from the philanthropic community. As a strong fiscal steward, Advance CTE works hard to ensure that more than **99 percent of staff time** is used on project and programmatic activities.

To support our new three-year strategic plan, we have implemented quarterly organizational stocktakes both internally and with our Board to reinforce accountability and challenge ourselves to track progress or proactively intervene if we are not on target to meet a strategic goal. We have also created a culture shift with our Board to better use them as thought partners to drive our work.



Advance CTE wishes to thank state members from its Equity Kitchen Cabinet for providing student pictures for this report.





*State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work*

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