ENGAGING FACULTY AND EMPLOYERS
to Scale Micro-credentials and Micro-pathways

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Skills Lab
THE ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT: Empowering Our Diverse Communities for Success
STUDENT PROFILE

64% Hispanic
9% African-American
22% White
3% Asian
4% Other

60% Female
40% Male

32% Full-Time
68% Part-Time

100,000 Students Served Annually

28.3% Under-Resourced Students

48.7% Economically Disadvantaged

70% Rely on Financial Aid & Scholarships

*Updated May 2021
Who We Serve
In-District Potential Online Learners

Total market
680,655

288,263
Some college, no degree
25 yrs*

392,392
HS graduate, no degree
18 yrs*

81% of this market are 25 years of age or older

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Data | 2020: 5-Year Estimates | Educational Attainment | Extracted County Data
Who We Impact
Service Area of Potential Online Learners

Total market 207,929

- 82,446 Some college, no degree 25 yrs*
- 125,483 HS graduate, no degree 18 yrs*

85% of this market are 25 years of age or older

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Data | 2020: 5-Year Estimates | Educational Attainment | Extracted County Data
THE SKILLS MARKET:
Bridging Skills Gaps for our Local Community
The “Uniquely Human” Skills Gap

Uniquely Human Skills - Critical Thinking, Communication, Empathy, Teamwork, Resilience, etc.

- 65% of Schoolchildren Will Work in Jobs That Have Yet to be Invented
- 75% of Employers Can’t Find New Graduates with “Soft Skills”
- 92% of Surveyed Executives Say “Soft Skills” are Equally or More Important than Technical Skills
2 in 5 working-age adults have completed a nondegree credential; 1 in 5 report it as their highest level of education.
The Skills Market

Nondegree credentials issued by community colleges have the highest alumni ratings, while those issued by individual businesses and companies have the lowest.

Alumni ratings (strongly agree/agree) by provider type:

- Community college: Worth the cost - 78%, Helped me achieve goals - 59%, Made me an attractive candidate - 67%
- Vocational/technical college: Worth the cost - 68%, Helped me achieve goals - 57%, Made me an attractive candidate - 67%
- Government: Worth the cost - 57%, Helped me achieve goals - 41%, Made me an attractive candidate - 57%
- Professional association: Worth the cost - 73%, Helped me achieve goals - 32%, Made me an attractive candidate - 49%
- Business/company: Worth the cost - 54%, Helped me achieve goals - 40%, Made me an attractive candidate - 49%

Share of adults with a nondegree credential:

BASE: 25- to 84-year-olds with an educational certificate who report a nondegree credential as their highest level of educational attainment (n=5,492)
Why Micro-credentials and Why should you care?
It is a matter of diversity and equity by creating visibility!
THE SKILLS LAB:
Supporting Skills Development & Providing Training Solutions
Promoting social mobility and equity in our local community by supporting each College’s capacity to deliver credentials of value around in-demand skills

Our Values

- Learner-Centered
- Employer-Validated
- Data-Informed
- Accessible
- Quality
- Scalable
The Skills Lab

What We Do

- Train faculty/staff to embed skills badges in credit-bearing courses
- Train faculty/staff to facilitate micro-credential learning experiences
- Design and deliver employability skills training that result in micro-credentials
- Collaborate with the Colleges and local employers to design new micro-credentials
- Support the development of micro-pathways at the Colleges
The Why

- Empower students for success by awarding verified micro-credentials (including digital badges) that articulate in-demand marketable and technical skills to employers
- Increase social mobility and position students for greater competitiveness in the job market

Guiding Principles

- Represent in-demand skills
- Require skill assessments
- Assessed by credentialed faculty or staff
ENGAGING FACULTY: The Course+ Badge Initiative
Course+ Badge Purpose

To **build students’ marketable skills** by incorporating **digital badges into academic courses** that are offered in an upcoming semester

Description

- 10-week online training that guides faculty through the badge integration process which includes:
  - Creation of digital badge activities
  - Some minor to significant course redesign
- Completers receive a **Badge Specialist Digital Badge**

Format

- Asynchronous—weekly assignments in Canvas
- Synchronous (via Zoom) faculty discussions and instructional design consultations
Engaging Faculty

Marketable Skills Badges

- Collaboration
- Creative Problem-Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Empathy
- Initiative
- Intercultural Fluency
- Oral Communication
- Resilience

These Marketable Skills Badges utilize the Education Design Lab’s 21st Century Skills and Competencies.
Engaging Faculty

Fall 2020 – Summer 2022

• 6 Faculty Cohorts

• 139 Badge Specialists 🙌

• 83% Completers are Very Confident in replicating Badges into other courses

“Going through this course helped with my knowledge of Badges, but also made me reflect on my curriculum for the course.”

- Faculty Badge Specialist
Engaging Faculty

Fall 2020 – Summer 2022

Totals

- **4,859** students enrolled
- **2,526** Total Marketable Skills Badges Awarded
- **51%** earner rate

Course Badge FA20 - SU22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Badges Awarded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>191 (35.2%)</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
<td>324 (53.7%)</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2021</td>
<td>240 (66.5%)</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>1719 (52.6%)</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
<td>1701 (49%)</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2022</td>
<td>684 (51.7%)</td>
<td>369</td>
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ENGAGING FACULTY:
Creating a Community of Practice
Engaging Faculty

Purpose
To BE a thought leadership and a practitioner support group for those professionals who are awarding verified digital badges that articulate in-demand marketable skills to employers.

How
Sharing ideas, mining best practices, informing decisions

Who
Faculty or staff who are Badge Coaches or Badge Specialists
Participant Expectations

• Participate in two synchronous events per semester
• Participate in discussion forums
• Give constructive feedback to proposed frameworks and initiatives
• Be an ambassador for marketable skills
ENGAGING EMPLOYER PARTNERS: Collaborating on Micro-courses and Micro-pathways
Micro-courses and Micro-pathways

- **Micro-course:** A short (10-15 hrs), non-credit learning experience that focuses on a single in-demand skill and results in micro-credential.

- **Micro-pathway:** Two or more stackable credentials that lead to jobs in high-growth sectors and path to a degree.
Healthcare Micro-pathways

Late Fall 2019, we received two large state grants to design micro-pathways and develop micro-credentials. We engaged local healthcare employers in the following ways:

- **Feedback Sessions:** Met with local healthcare employers individually, in team meetings, and at a workforce conference.
- **Curriculum Development:** Recruited Subject Matter Experts from local healthcare employers.
- **Pilot Participation:** Invited local healthcare employers to pilot new micro-credentials.
- **Badge-to-Hire:** Worked with a local healthcare employer to guarantee job interviews for digital badge micro-course completers.
Healthcare Micro-pathways

- **15 New Micro-courses** leading to employer-validated digital badges
  *Included technical and marketable skills*

- **4 New CE Micro-credential Programs** leading to certifications

- **6 New Micro-pathways** to make career progressions accessible and visible
Engaging Employers

- San Antonio College: Empathetic Patient Care Skill
- St. Philip's College: Phlebotomy Fundamentals Skill
- Continuing Education: Mental Health First Aid Skill
- St. Philip's College: Introduction to Medical Terminology Skill
- San Antonio College: Healthcare Critical Thinking Skill
Engaging Employers

Pathway Designed in Collaboration with the Education Design Lab

Legend
- 2+ Stackable Credentials
- 21st Century Skills
- Technical Skills
- Work Based Learning
- Direct Entry into Workforce
- Continued Learning and Upskilling Opportunities

Pathway:
- BLS
- CNA
- Patient Care Tech/CNA
- LVN (Licensure)
- Licensed Vocational Nurse
- Associate Degree
- RN
- Basic Phlebotomy
- Med Tech
- EKG Tech
- Median Tech
- Patient Care Tech/CNA

Wages:
- LVN: $18/hr
- RN: $28/hr
- Patient Care Tech/CNA: $13/hr

Critical Thinking

Alamo Colleges District

Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
Achieving Leader in the Nation: College of Distinction
Engaging Employers

Pathway Designed in Collaboration with the Education Design Lab

Legend
- 2+ Stackable Credentials: Credentials + Courses articulate to Credit. Credits count towards a Degree.
- 21st Century Skills Digital Micro-Credential
- Technical Skills Credential
- Work Based Learning
- Direct Entry into Workforce
- Continued Learning and Upskilling Opportunities

Pathway Designed in Collaboration with the Education Design Lab
Questions?

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BONUS MATERIAL:
Learner Feedback
Employability Skills Bundle: Digital Badges for Increased Employability

of surveyed learners in Alamo Colleges non-credit badge courses* responded that they believe they are more employable having earned a badge.

*as of 11.2.2022

79%
Qualitative Comments

“I took this course while applying for new jobs. Believe it or not, the exercises forced me to really think about my previous experiences. I had an interview a few days ago and I was so relaxed and confident because of the exercises - the interviewers loved me and I start my new position on Monday!!”

- Learner, Resilience Micro-course
“I feel that I have most definitely honed skills that I was just mediocre at. And with this experience I honestly feel more confident and more capable in different situations that can come up on a daily basis at work… I am already looking into starting the summer session at Northeast Lakeview College.”

- Goodwill San Antonio Employee and Badge-earner