



2018 Year-End Report

2018 was a year of growth for Advance Vermont. A second full-time employee joined the team, generous financial support was secured from the McClure Foundation, and stakeholder partnerships were deepened with the efforts of four working groups. A major focus of the year was a cross-sector strategic planning process, which resulted in a soon-to-be-released state plan to increase postsecondary attainment for Vermont and a newly defined role for the organization, including revised vision and mission statements. This was followed by a comprehensive brand review, which led to a name change and new branding to support broadening our focus beyond the 70x2025 goal.

We are pleased to announce that according to the Lumina Foundation Stronger Nation Report, postsecondary attainment grew from 47.7 to 49.7 percent in 2018.

Vision:

An educated Vermont citizenry that powers a prosperous and resilient economy and vibrant, civically engaged communities.

Mission:

Advance the civic and economic vitality of Vermont by growing the number of Vermonters with degrees and credentials, increasing equity in educational attainment, and strengthening connections between education, training and employment.

Big Goal:

70 percent of working-age Vermonters will possess a degree or credential of value by 2025.

Convened stakeholders to elevate conversation and spur action

- ▶ Formed four working groups, comprised of a total of 50 subject matter experts, to inform and advance efforts to increase access to and completion of postsecondary education.
- ▶ Established regular workforce development stakeholder calls with representatives from major employer organizations, postsecondary education providers, and state government.
- ▶ Partnered with the Vermont Department of Labor to host the 2018 Vermont Apprenticeship Summit which brought together a cross-sector group of experts and stakeholders.
- ▶ Hosted a briefing from the Agency of Education for working group members and work-based learning practitioners from across the state.
- ▶ Presented at numerous events with statewide audiences of influencers, including the Vermont State Workforce Development Board, Vermont School Boards Association and Vermont Superintendents Association Fall Conference, and VSAC Transitions & Career Planning Conference.
- ▶ Partnered with VSAC and the Vermont State Colleges to host a research symposium featuring new research on postsecondary completion in Vermont and provide a forum to address completion.
- ▶ Began work on Vermont Workforce Talent Summit set for May 2019.

Launched efforts to raise awareness about the importance of education after high school

- ▶ Created campaign branding and student-focused video for Statewide FAFSA Completion Initiative.
- ▶ Commissioned research survey to gain insight into perceptions and opinions about postsecondary education throughout the state.

- ▶ Partnered with Saint Michael's College to conduct research survey to identify barriers to postsecondary education for adults.
- ▶ Contracted with a creative agency on an organizational rebrand to better align name and branding with the redefined focus of Advanced Vermont's work.
- ▶ Drafted communications plan to guide marketing toward students, parents, employers, and influencers.
- ▶ Gave keynote address to students at the Windham County Sophomore Summit.
- ▶ Appeared as guest on Vermont State Colleges System statewide public access program.

Advanced the policy dialogue on access to postsecondary education

- ▶ Drafted a state plan to increase postsecondary attainment with feedback from state and national experts, and stakeholders.
- ▶ Informed the development of and advocated for passage of major workforce development bill (Act 189) that supports the development of career pathways, expands access to apprenticeship programs and work-based learning, and promotes the innovation of career and technical education programs.
- ▶ Partnered with State Workforce Development Board to better identify, evaluate and publicize credentials of value programs within Vermont.
- ▶ Established postsecondary attainment as a policy priority for employers through work with organizations such as the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Vermont Futures Project, Vermont Talent Pipeline Management, and Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility.
- ▶ Participated in industry-level conversations focused on how to support in-demand employees seeking access to postsecondary education or assistance to pay off education-related debt.
- ▶ Worked with a coalition led by the Department of Children and Families to identify State options to provide debt free education and training to foster children.

Harnessed data to inform stakeholders

- ▶ Coordinated with stakeholders from across the state to determine key indicators of postsecondary attainment and access data sources.
- ▶ In consultation with national experts, began development of a public facing data dashboard to inform policy and program development.
- ▶ Produced white paper to outline the various population segments where targeted outreach and interventions are needed to achieve attainment goal.
- ▶ Produced county level pk-12 data to be used to inform regional level work.