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Special Section
**Diversity
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ECMC Foundation New Model of Career and Technical Education Aims to Bridge the Skills Gap

BY PETER J. TAYLOR

THE HEALTH OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY today offers a mixed-read. From the outside, it looks positive: a 16-year low unemployment rate and continued job growth indicate a strong economy. While the recession is over, not everyone is happy.

Among the less-thrilled are employers across all industries, which are finding it difficult to find workers with the right skill and talent to fill key positions. The problem is known as the “skills gap”—a mismatch between skills the workforce has to offer and skills businesses need.

In fact, of the six million jobs that are currently available, nearly half are middle-skill jobs, which require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree, according to latest figures from the U.S. Department of Labor. Among them are “new collar” careers in the IT and health care industries, which are rapidly emerging because of evolving technology, data science and cloud computing.

Businesses, both big and small, are concerned. Addressing the skills gap takes a collective effort from everyone in the community, including career and technical education (CTE) institutions. Yet, when it comes to preparing the American workforce to meet business demand, there is a prevailing belief among American families that the only education that matters is one that leads to a four-year degree.

We can no longer afford this misconception to continue.

The stigma against CTE harms both the American workforce and the future of our country’s economy. CTE is and should be considered a viable option for careers that pay family-sustaining wages. The misconception was partially created by for-profit players in this space, which for so long got away with delivering subpar education at the expense of students’ futures. It’s no wonder the stigma persists.

Altierus Career College (Altierus) is working to change the narrative. Altierus is a nonprofit career school that provides affordable,



Peter J. Taylor,
President
ECMC Foundation

quality, student-centered training that puts student success at the center of everything. Its curriculum offerings, career placement services and student support enable students to succeed in the classroom and on the job.

A grantee partner aligned with ECMC Foundation’s mission, Altierus provides a pathway to career success for all students, especially those who are from underserved populations, including students of color, low-income students and those who are first in their family to continue their education beyond high school. The majority of its student population are Black and Latino/Hispanic and many receive Pell grants and other financial assistance. As part of Altierus’ commitment to increase educational access, it provides generous scholarship and grant programs to address unmet financial need.

Many Altierus students are “new-traditional”—over the age of 25, working full-time and often supporting families. Because many need additional support and flexibility, the school offers individualized student attention through academic counseling, tutoring and remedial educational services, as well as career counseling to promote gainful employment after graduation.

Students are the focal point of everything Altierus does, and success is measured by the number of skills earned by students, interviews scheduled and doors opened.

Organizations like Altierus are working to bridge the skills gap and make a difference in the lives of their students now and into the future. **S**

Peter J. Taylor is the President of ECMC Foundation, the philanthropic arm of ECMC Group. Based in Los Angeles, the Foundation makes investments across the country to improve educational outcomes for all students, especially those from underserved populations.



Peter J. Taylor
President
ECMC Foundation

Peter J. Taylor is President of ECMC Foundation, an organization whose mission is to inspire and to facilitate improvements that affect educational outcome among underserved populations through evidence-based innovation.

Previously, Taylor served as Chief Financial Officer of the University of California, based in Oakland, CA. As the first CFO in the history of the UC system, Taylor oversaw financial management for the entire \$25 billion institution.

Taylor spent close to twenty years in municipal finance banking for Lehman Brothers and Barclays Capital, where Taylor was Managing Director for the West Coast Fixed Income Group. Taylor has

Serves on Board of Directors for:

- Edison International
- Pacific Life Insurance Company

also worked with state and local governments, school districts, electric and natural gas utilities, and universities.

Taylor's community involvement includes being appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown to the Board of Trustees of the California State University system.

Taylor holds a Bachelor's degree from UCLA, and Master's degree in Public Policy Analysis from Claremont Graduate University.



Scott Taylor
Executive Vice President,
General Counsel & Secretary
Symantec Corporation

Scott Taylor is Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of Symantec Corporation, an information protection company that helps people, businesses and governments seeking the freedom to unlock the opportunities technology brings.

Taylor leads approximately 225 professionals globally and is responsible for the Fortune 500 company's legal work and intellectual property portfolio in addition to its government affairs, public policy, corporate responsibility and philanthropic work.

Prior to Symantec, Taylor served as Chief Administrative Officer, Senior Vice President,

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- Piper Jaffray Companies

and General Counsel of Phoenix Technologies, managing all legal, human resources, facilities and IT functions worldwide.

Taylor is a National Advisory Board Member of the Stanford University Center for Comparative Studies on Race and Ethnicity.

Taylor holds a Bachelors degree in International Relations from Stanford University and a Juris Doctor from the George Washington University Law School.



Dorothy A. Terrell
Founder &
Managing Partner
FirstCap Advisors

Dorothy A. Terrell is Founder and Managing Partner of FirstCap Advisors, a venture capital and advisory services firm that helps innovative technology companies successfully navigate the critical early stages of product and business development.

Prior to launching FirstCap Advisors, Terrell was a Partner at First Light Capital, a venture capital firm.

From 2005 to 2008, Terrell took a leave from First Light Capital to also serve as CEO of the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, a national not-for-profit promoting economic prosperity in America's inner cities through private sector

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- Herman Miller, Inc.

engagement.

Terrell has numerous awards including being named one of the "Top 50 Women Line Managers in America" by *Executive Female Magazine*, one of the "Top Ten Business Marketers" by *Business Marketing Magazine* and the "Distinguished Alumni Award" from Florida A&M University.

Terrell holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Florida A&M University.



Tidjane Thiam
Chief Executive Officer
Credit Suisse Group AG

Tidjane Thiam is Chief Executive Officer of Credit Suisse Group AG.

Thiam has extensive experience in executive management, financial over sights and strategic planning.

Previously, Thiam was Group Chief Executive of Prudential plc from 2009 to 2015, having served as Chief Financial Officer from 2008 to 2009. Previously, Thiam served in a variety of leadership roles at Aviva from, holding successively the positions of Group Strategy and Development Director, Managing Director of Aviva International, Group Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Europe. Thiam joined Aviva in from McKinsey & Company, a

Serves on Board of Directors for:

- Twenty-First Century Fox

consulting firm, where Thiam was a Partner.

Thiam has held leadership positions and received recognitions abroad including serving as Chairman of the Board of the Association of British Insurers.

Thiam is a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.

Thiam graduated from the École Polytechnique and the École Nationale Supérieure des Mines de Paris, and holds an MBA from INSEAD.



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