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## November 2024 Newsletter | Volume 2, Issue 011

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### **ADVANCE CTE REVISES TWO-DECADE OLD NATIONAL CLUSTERS FRAMEWORK**

*By Derek Kalchbrenner, Education Specialist*

In October 2024, ADVANCE CTE released its first revision of the 2002 [The National Career Clusters® Framework](#) which has been the primary source used by Career, Technical Education (CTE) programs for curriculum development. The revised Framework is meant to be more reflective of today's world of work and can be used both by MassSTEP and Adult Education directors, instructors, and advisors to guide curriculum development and student career exploration.

The revised Framework includes 14 industry Clusters and 72 Sub-Clusters, many of which have undergone substantial revisions. For example, the Information Technology Cluster is now the Digital Technology Cluster, and includes Data Science & Artificial Intelligence, Information Technology (IT) Support & Services, Network Systems & Cybersecurity, Software Solutions, and Unmanned Vehicle Technology as Sub-Clusters.

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The new Framework focuses on interdisciplinary study and transferable skills across the clusters such as entrepreneurship and management.

The Framework also has a [Framework Guidebook](#) that can help practitioners learn the Framework's terminology and organization. It also has a crosswalk between the new and previous framework.

ADVANCE CTE's webpage also has resources to help directors, instructors, and advisors use the Framework to help students understand the world of work and specific career pathways. You can also watch this [short video](#) for a helpful introduction.

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## **MassSTEP PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

**Jamaica Plain Community Centers Adult Learning Program's Student Spotlight:  
Chance**

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*By Tomm McCarthy, Education Coordinator, Jamaica Plain Community Centers Adult Learning Center*

Chance was a Certified Nursing Assistant student in one of ALP's first CNA cohorts. Since completing her training, she has passed her clinical rotation, Nurse Aide Certification, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Nursing Assistant Certification. "I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the time and effort you invested in ensuring the success of the first CNA-cohort," she said in an email to JPCCALP Staff. "Your dedication has been invaluable, and I deeply appreciate it."

Congratulations, Chance! Because of your hard work, your commitment to furthering your learning, and your determination, we are proud to recognize your achievements and know that you will find success in your future endeavors.

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## **MassSTEP STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**

### **An Interview with MassSTEP Graduate, Julian Delgado**

*By Susanne Campagna, Director, Hampden County Sheriff's Office*

As the MassSTEP director since the program began in 2017, I have seen more than 200 students complete the program. I talked with one graduate recently to catch up on his journey moving through the justice system and where he is today as a result of his time in custody.



*LEFT: MassSTEP student Julian Delgado at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, Holyoke, MA*



*RIGHT: Julian Delgado at work at On the Border Mexican Restaurant, November 2024*

Julian Delgado spent his youth moving around from Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, Ohio, Delaware and Florida. During his teen years, he attended public school in Springfield, MA but dropped out in 10th grade when he became a parent and felt it was his responsibility to work to support his child. He moved to Florida where he did handyman work; but during Covid, business slowed down and he found himself falling behind in rent, bills and child support. During a visit back to Massachusetts, Julian “took to the streets” to make some quick money. Upon his arrest and conviction, he spent time in state prison but after a few months, he was eligible for the step down program which brought him to HCSO’s Western Massachusetts Recovery and Wellness Center (WMRWC) in Springfield, MA for the remainder of his sentence.

When asked what lesson he had learned from his experience he simply stated, “No amount of money is worth losing your freedom.” He realizes the domino affect his time away has had on his family especially his two daughters who rely on him for personal, emotional and financial support. As he got acclimated to the environment at WMRWC, school was a mandatory part of his programming. He recalled a time when his daughter had asked him for help with her third grade homework. It was a wakeup call for him when he realized he could not help her. He began studying for his GED and when the

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opportunity for the MassSTEP Culinary Arts/HSE program became available, he was the first to request an application. His road to being accepted into the program was a bit rocky. Although on paper he was a qualified applicant, because he had more than two years remaining on his sentence, it was decided to defer his acceptance until the fall of 2024. Julian was not taking no for an answer and began his campaign of self-advocacy and presented a convincing argument to the staff about why he needed to be in the spring cohort and not be deferred until the fall.

The MassSTEP Culinary Arts/HSE program opened the door to where he is now. He completed this 15-week program and earned several certificates including ServSafe for Managers, Certified Kitchen Cook, Allergen Training and Guest Services Gold. He attributes his success to his Chef instructors, his GED teacher and his advisor. Once Julian was eligible for Pre-release status (having unescorted community access but residing at WMRWC), he was hired as a line cook at a Mexican restaurant in West Springfield, MA. Julian stated he did not have to “start at the bottom” and attributes the skills he learned during the MassSTEP program to bypassing the lower-level jobs and being able to handle the responsibility of being a cook in a fast paced kitchen. He takes pride in his work and reports that his manager and the wait staff “love me”. This full time, benefited position is a stepping stone for his future which includes earning his GED. He is halfway there and realizes there is no time like the present to get this done. Once released, his plan is to open a food truck business. Julian states, “Incarceration has been a blessing for me because I chose to make the most of my time and turn a negative situation into something positive for my future.”

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## **MassSTEP PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

### **Story of a First-Year MassSTEP CDL Program**

*By Jonathan McDonnell, Coordinator of Vocational Education, Bristol County Sheriff's Office*

Mass Step programs are very different from one another, but after over a year at the helm of one, I think I have some insight to share. If I had a time machine, I would do a few things differently when planning and implementing our Mass Step plan.

For starters, I would have taken more time to focus on what could go wrong than what could go right in the early stages. The program seemed simple on its face: a CDL training for incarcerated students. We had everything outlined and everyone seemed on board with all the necessary steps. Unfortunately, it was the layers between these checkpoints that needed more consideration.

One thing I underestimated was how difficult enrolling students would be. I expected that finding students for the classes would be easy. I work at the Bristol County House of Correction. Everyone wanted to join the class that would lead to obtaining a CDL license. The problem was not in finding students who wanted to attend; it was finding students who could qualify to complete the program. At the facility, the majority of inmates are pretrial, which means they are not allowed to leave the facility and they have very unpredictable timelines for their release. For these reasons and others, these folks are not

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able to participate in the program. Amongst the sentenced population, there is a limited number of individuals who are expected to be here long enough to finish the program and also have an active driver's license. Once we whittled down the population to who was eligible to participate, the numbers were very small—much smaller than we anticipated. Even then, it was hard to find good fits for the program. Eventually, we created a process for identifying individuals upon entry and now have much less trouble filling our classes with candidates.

Correctional Officer staffing also impacted our ability to implement the program effectively. Students were not allowed off-site for months because of C.O. staffing shortages. These shortages caused us to have to move the location of the class; to sometimes still not be able to hold class; to not be able to take students off-site for training or testing, and ultimately—to not be able to take the final CDL exam, and more. All of these impacted our ability to demonstrate student progress, which was extremely anxiety-inducing. In addition to the C.O. shortage, we had our own turnover: three different people in the LACES data entry position in the space of a year.

We were presented with some unexpected challenges, but we have since figured out a clear path forward by learning from these challenges. There are currently two individuals taking their Class A CDL final exams next week. There are several others enrolled at the school who will soon be ready to test as well. We have a few students ready to transition to the driving school and a pipeline of others enrolled in the class ready to take their permit exams. We have more academic supports in place to help improve our EFL gains. We now have a streamlined process and solid institutional supports. We should be able to make the most of our designs and greatly improve our outcomes over the coming months now that we have a solid foundation in place. Unfortunately, it took a challenging year for us to get to this point.

So if you are new to the world of MassSTEP, before you jump in, know that there will be pitfalls, but that you will learn to avoid them. There will be setbacks, but you will make up the ground you lost. Planning goes a long way. The plan may take some detours, so plan

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for everything that could go wrong and plan a way to get on track.

I am sure there are challenges on the horizon, but we are more ready to meet them than we were a year ago. With the support of the MassSTEP grant, we have built a process that offers a transformative opportunity to the population we serve. So, to my fellow Mass Steppers, I hope my story has something to offer and I hope you have only good outcomes.



## **MassSTEP PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT**

### **English for CNC Careers**

*By Shirin Ashoury, Adult Education Program Manager at Ascentria*

The English class for future CNC learners at the Ascentria Client Center equips students with essential language skills for success in CNC training and workplace environments. By focusing on technical vocabulary, workplace communication, and foundational grammar, the program ensures students can confidently navigate CNC-related terminology and scenarios.

Key topics include workplace safety language, tool and measurement vocabulary, and basic machine-related terms. Practical applications such as reading safety signs, reporting



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problems, and following instructions are emphasized to prepare students for real-world challenges. Role-playing and group activities build speaking confidence, while listening exercises and written assignments strengthen comprehension and usage.

Students are demonstrating steady progress, particularly in mastering vocabulary and constructing clear, simple sentences for technical and workplace contexts. Challenges such as pronunciation of specific terms and understanding grammar differences between imperative and passive structures are addressed through targeted exercises and supplemental materials.

In addition to language skills, the class emphasizes collaboration, helping students develop effective communication within team settings. With high levels of motivation and engagement, students are steadily gaining the skills necessary to transition into CNC training programs and manufacturing careers.

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**CNC Class – Computer Numerical Control** - <https://youtu.be/IEyNWtM6MW4>

Computer numerical control (CNC) is a manufacturing method that automates the control, movement and precision of machine tools through the use of preprogrammed computer software, which is embedded inside the tools. CNC is commonly used in manufacturing for machining metal and plastic parts.



1. Introduction to Machine Tool Technologies
2. Precision Measurement Techniques
3. CNC Machine Fundamentals
4. Blueprint Reading and Interpretation
5. CNC Machining Techniques
6. Machine Tool Management and Organization
7. Practice and Certification Preparation

Each week consists of 6 hours of instruction, except for the final week, which includes 13 hours of hands-on practice and preparation for the CNC operator certification exam.

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### **Contextualized English for CNC Machine Operator**

Ascentria Care Alliance in partnership with MassSTEP is offering an English class with

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focus on CNC (Computer Numerical Control) Machinist Operator vocabulary and work skills. This class will provide students with the basic knowledge, vocabulary and work skills to successfully attend and complete the CNC course offered at QCC. Interested students should be SPL 4 or higher to attend the program. Please call Shirin Ashoury at 603-573-1180 to register for the class.

English classes will meet weekly on Mondays from 2pm to 4 pm at 11 Shattuck Street, Worcester, MA 01605.

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**COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS**



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