Gateway Technical College located in Kenosha, Wisconsin, wanted to find a way to validate programs and develop a highly qualified workforce. Employers were requesting third party validation and placed value on certification programs. Gateway embedded training and certifications into their program.

One of the necessary steps to success in this process was sharing what everyone else was doing and learning from them. Gateway discussed certifications with other community colleges and employers to gain different perspectives and best practices.

Gateway began the process of implementing certification programs by asking employers which skills were most important to them. They explained the value of the certifications to employers and found that some companies were willing to pay additional raises based on certifications.

The curriculum is nationally vetted and improved, leading to greater credibility and ease of transferability.

The bootcamp program implemented with certifications embedded yielded a 95% job placement rate.

Students become advocates of the program. They believe it helps them stand apart from other candidates. They educate employers on the value of the certifications.

“Certification programs are highly valuable. At Gateway, they add to what we offer as a curriculum and make our college stand out from other colleges that don’t offer them. It is a talking point with businesses in saying that we are aligned with a national program and third party validation. Certifications provide a common terminology across education and business that brings us closer together.”

-Debbie Davidson, Vice President, Workforce & Economic Development Division, Gateway Technical College

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