

Career Services in Kentucky Summer Convening

Real Work, Real Impact: Career Services for Real Life

Date: July 24, 2025

Location: Kentucky Community and Technical College System, 300 N Main St, Versailles

8:00-9:00 AM	Registration & Networking Breakfast Continental Breakfast to be provided
9:00-9:30 AM	Welcoming & Opening Remarks Setting the Stage: Leading with Purpose in Career Services As Kentucky works to fill workforce gaps and increase participation, the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) is highlighting career services as a crucial link between education and employment. In this opening session, CPE President Dr. Aaron Thompson will share insights on how career services must adapt to support today's graduates and meet the demands of a rapidly changing job market. <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Mary Jackson, CPE Senior Associate of Workforce and Economic Initiatives– Dr. Aaron Thompson, CPE President
9:30-10:15 AM	Opening Keynote Serving Students Amid Changing Policy As higher education navigates shifting political and policy landscapes, our commitment to students must stay strong. This keynote offers an honest, heartfelt look at what it means to support students in uncertain times. With both compassion and strategy, we'll explore how career services professionals can stay focused, adapt their approach, and ensure every student, no matter their background, has access to opportunity, dignity, and direction. Together, we'll reaffirm our shared role in guiding students not just in their careers, but through the challenges of today's world. <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Dr. Dwayne Compton, Senior Associate Dean, Community Engagement, Assistant Professor, University of Louisville School of Medicine
10:15-10:30 AM	Where the Jobs Are: Aligning Career Services with Kentucky's Key Growth Sectors Kentucky faces critical workforce shortages in sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, energy, education, and emerging fields such as aerospace and Film and Television. This session will highlight current and projected areas of job growth across the state. Career services professionals will learn how to align advising, programs, and employer partnerships with these high-demand industries. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to help students turn their education into meaningful careers in Kentucky's changing job market. <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Mary Jackson, CPE Senior Associate of Workforce and Economic Initiatives
10:30-10:45 AM	Coffee Break

10:45-11:45 AM

Peers with Purpose: A Two-Year & Four-Year College Perspective

In this engaging panel, student workers and ambassadors from Hazard Community and Technical College and Eastern Kentucky University will share how they've supported career services on campus. From promoting events to helping peers get workforce ready, they'll reflect on how these roles have boosted their confidence, built transferable skills, and prepared them for their own careers, all while managing the unique challenges of the college experience. Learn how student employees can be powerful, relatable advocates who expand the reach of small career services teams.

- Moderator: Dr. Leslie Sizemore, Vice President, Workforce and Economic Development, CPE
- Presenters: Dr. Jennifer Lindon, President, Hazard Community & Technical College (Hazard CTC) & Darlene Stocker, Associate Director, Office of Advising and Career Services, Eastern Kentucky University
- Panelists: Student Ambassadors, Hazard CTC & ECU

11:45 AM-12:30 PM

Networking Lunch

Buffet lunch provided onsite.

12:30-1:30 PM

Career Services Everywhere: Building a Culture Without Owning It All

When you're a small team, you can't be everywhere, but your influence can be. This session explores how career services offices can embed career readiness across campus by using creativity, as well as empowering faculty, staff, and student leaders to champion career conversations. Learn how to plant "career cues" in unlikely places, build micro-collaborations with key allies, and shift your campus culture without having to lead every initiative yourself. Ideal for those looking to expand impact without the ability to expand the org chart.

- Megan Boone, Director, Center for Career Development and Experiential Education, Morehead State University

1:30-1:45 PM

Break

1:45-2:30 PM

Technology, Automation and Free Tools: Saving Time and Stretching Resources

This session will showcase free and low-cost tools that support job boards, virtual career fairs, resume reviews, and career development content. Learn how small teams are streamlining tasks like appointment scheduling and student outreach using simple, effective platforms and templates. We'll also explore real-world examples of resource-limited offices achieving big impact—proving that innovation doesn't have to be expensive.

- Vince Bingham, Director of Career Services, Kentucky State University

2:30-3:15 PM

Futuriti in Focus: Transforming How Kentucky Learners Plan Their Futures & Careers

Explore Futuriti.org, Kentucky's new interactive career and education platform designed to help students connect their interests to high-demand jobs and programs across the Commonwealth. This session will feature a live demo of the tool's key features, including the Future Finder, career insights, wage data, and education cost comparisons. Learn practical ways to integrate Futuriti into student success strategies to guide learners from exploration to employment. The presenter will also discuss how the platform supports statewide goals for credential attainment and fosters collaboration across education and workforce sectors.

- Jessica Fletcher, Program Director, Outreach and Partnerships, Student Access and Success, CPE

3:15-3:30 PM

Closing Session

Staff will reflect on the day's key takeaways, discuss forthcoming challenges, and chart a path toward innovative, strategic, and sustainable change.

- Dr. Leslie Sizemore, Vice President of Workforce and Economic Initiatives