

**CONTACT:** KarenSue Zoeller, Communications Coordinator  
Governor's Office of the Workforce Commission  
225-219-4491  
E-mail: [kzoeller@idsmail.com](mailto:kzoeller@idsmail.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Summit to Address Industry-Based Certifications as Workforce Development Strategy**

Baton Rouge, November 3. Local, regional and state leaders representing the public sector will gather in Baton Rouge on Monday and Tuesday to highlight the importance of industry-based certifications as a workforce and economic development strategy. Industry-based certifications are portable credentials recognized by industry and earned by an individual as a result of mastering knowledge and skill competencies. "Students at both the secondary and post-secondary level are currently enrolled in a variety of programs that result in industry-based certifications and we want to expand those offerings – both in the number of programs and in the number of new certifications offered each year," noted Ann Stokes, Chair of the Governor's Workforce Commission. "Those students who leave school with an industry-based credential have a better chance of being hired because employers know that they have the training necessary to meet their hiring specifications. This is a plus for employers as it provides a well-trained workforce and they are able to save on training costs."

The Governor's Office of the Workforce Commission and their agency partners comprise an Industry-Based Certification Council that meets on a regular basis to recommend implementation of certification programs to secondary and post-secondary training and education programs. "This year we worked with the National Skills Standards Board to identify additional certifications that fit with the Department of Economic Development's Vision 2020 and occupations in demand as identified by the Occupational Forecasting Conference," said Mrs. Stokes. In addition to certifications in automotive technology, hospitality management, process operations, emergency response, six new certifications will be adopted this year. "We desperately need welders in a variety of industries, and as a result, we are working with the American Welding Society to ensure that our programs carry their certifications," said Mrs. Stokes.

The Council has recommended four information technology certifications: CompTIA's A+, Nivo International's MOUS (Desktop Applications), Cisco's Certified Network Associate

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(CCNA) and Prosofttraining's Web Development and Design (CIW). "Vision 2020 has identified the information technology cluster as one that is vital to the economic growth and well-being of our state," explained Mrs. Stokes. "Our emphasis on these four certifications reflects that recommendation."

The sixth new certification is the Child Development Associate offered by the Council for Professional Recognition. "There will always be a need for child care providers," noted Mrs. Stokes. "But we want to make sure that the people who care for our young children are trained to recognize age-appropriate activities that are conducted in the safest environment possible. This certification tells parents that their children are receiving the best care and instruction possible."

According to Rick Spill of the National Skills Standards Board, the efforts undertaken by the Council and the state of Louisiana will result in Louisiana becoming the "beacon for all public sector workforce development efforts nationwide."

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