

ABQ PARTNERS:

Building on a successful internship program to launch youth apprenticeships

ABQ Partners for Youth Apprenticeship will launch the X3 neXt youth apprenticeship, combining college coursework, mentorship, and wraparound support to prepare young adults to step into middle-skill jobs in key New Mexico industries, including architecture and health care.

Led by the nonprofit Future Focused Education (FFE), ABQ Partners for Youth Apprenticeship is a consortium of charter schools, local employers, and higher education institutions. Partners include:

- **Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) Leadership High School**
- **Health Leadership High School**
- **University of New Mexico**
- **Central New Mexico Community College**
- **Associated General Contractors**
- **Mechanical Contractors Association & Sheet Metal Contractors Association**
- **Associated Contractors of New Mexico**
- **UNM Health**
- **Presbyterian Community Health**
- **Lovelace**
- **First Choice**
- **NM Hospital Association**

Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a region where high school completion and transitions into college and careers prove difficult for many young people, especially youth of color and low-income youth. ABQ Partners for Youth Apprenticeship aims to establish a smooth pathway from early high school to the start of successful careers that promote both apprentice and community health and prosperity.

ABQ Partners will work with career-focused charter schools, the ACE Leadership High School and the Health Leadership High School, which educate students who have not been well served in traditional school settings. For these students, the need to support their family by earning money in the short term can get in the way of an education that would lead to long term economic mobility.

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PAYA Grantee
Snapshot



FFE currently serves these students by connecting them to high-quality paid internships. With PAYA's support, they will pilot youth apprenticeships as another option for youth and employers. Their youth apprenticeships will combine paid work-based learning with clear pathways to postsecondary education and credentials, eliminating the trade-off between today's economic needs and tomorrow's opportunities.

In addition to its youth apprenticeship pilot, FFE is working with state policymakers to make it easier for schools throughout New Mexico to offer more work-based learning opportunities, including youth apprenticeship.

ABQ Partners will advance youth apprenticeship in Albuquerque by:

- **Building a continuum of work-based learning opportunities**, with existing employer partners that align business needs with students' interests;
- **Partnering with career-focused charter schools** to build youth apprenticeships where classroom learning and work-based learning are closely connected; and,
- **Registering the first youth apprenticeship** within New Mexico's state apprenticeship system.



"Youth Apprenticeship provides young people with an accessible, longer runway for self and career exploration and positions them as assets in their communities. We are looking forward to the day that internships, work based learning, and youth apprenticeship is widely recognized in New Mexico as a strategy for community health and prosperity."

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