



## CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CONGRESSIONAL FIELD HEARING

In October, the Opportunity America Jobs and Careers Coalition worked with Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus co-chair Rep. Glenn Thompson to organize a field hearing in Harrisburg, PA. Panelists included employers, educators and union officials in broad agreement about the need for more and better skills training in high schools and colleges. Opportunity America president Tamar Jacoby testified on behalf of the OA Jobs and Careers Coalition, underscoring the critical role employers play in making training more effective.

Reps. Mike Kelly (PA-3), Scott Perry (PA-4) and State Sen. John Blake also participated.



**Rep. Glenn Thompson** member of Congress and co-chair of the Congressional CTE Caucus

*"We have an obligation, whether as local, state or federal policy makers, to ensure that all Americans have access to quality programs that will equip them with the skills needed to succeed in an evolving and globally competitive job market."*

**Kimberly Green** executive director, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium

*"CTE is a proven strategy that engages students, aligns talent with opportunity and ensures preparation for the workforce and further education. As employers struggle to find the skilled workers needed to fill millions of job vacancies, it is critical that CTE play a larger role in expanding the nation's talent pipeline."*





**Tamar Jacoby** president, Opportunity America, on behalf of the OA Jobs and Careers Coalition

*"CTE educators and employers need each other. There can be little effective technical training without collaboration between the two sectors – and not just one time or occasionally. What’s needed is a sustained, structured exchange of information and often day-to-day cooperation."*

**Jim Kunz** business manager, International Union of Operating Engineers

*"Our members are experiencing near full employment. A skilled, productive operating engineer with a good work ethic can earn \$22 to \$33 per hour plus a full benefit package. These are well paying, lifetime careers. Yet despite the steady employment, good wages and benefits, finding qualified candidates for our program has been a challenge."*



**Amanda Novak** human resources manager, Tri-M Group, on behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors

*"To combat the sometimes negative perception associated with a career in construction, Tri-M partners with local trade and high schools to educate students and teachers and provide them with materials to assist in teaching the appropriate hands-on skills. We have employees who serve on boards, such as the Electrical Advisory Board at Lehigh Career and Technical Institute, and our CEO/President serves on the State Apprenticeship and Training Council."*

**Neil Ashbaugh** training and talent development specialist, Oberg Industries

*"Oberg partnered with Highlands High School on a pilot program called the Junior Apprenticeship Advantage. Its purpose is to teach basic manufacturing skills within the curriculum of a student’s senior year. It’s taught by the staff of Highlands and designed to meet the standards needed by our company. Our ultimate goal is to offer to those students preferred placement in our apprenticeship program and then full-time employment."*



**Sandra J. Himes** executive director, Lehigh Career & Technical Institute

*"Career and technical education plays a huge role in workforce and economic development for a region. Companies decide to move into an area or relocate out of an area based on whether they have access to a skilled workforce. They look to the career and technical schools to provide a pipeline of trained workers."*