Wendy F. Hensel
President

UNIVERSITY
of HAWAI'I ®

Ke Kulanui o Hawai'i

DEPT. COMM. NO. 311

January 9, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
  President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i  96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura, Speaker
  and Members of the House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i  96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, the University of Hawai'i is transmitting a copy of the Annual Report on Attainment of Industry-Recognized Credentials in Hawai'i's Education System, July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 (Section 304A-304, Hawai'i Revised Statutes) as requested by the Legislature.

In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, this report may be viewed electronically at:  https://www.hawaii.edu/govrel/docs/reports/2025/hrs304a-304_2025_industry-recognized-credentials_annual-report_2023-2024_508.pdf

Should you have any questions about this report, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Kim at (808) 956-4250, or via e-mail at scskim@hawaii.edu.

Sincerely,

Wendy F. Hensel
President

Enclosure

# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM

# ANNUAL REPORT



REPORT TO THE 2025 LEGISLATURE

Annual Report on Attainment of Industry-Recognized Credentials in
Hawaiʻi's Education System

HRS 304A-304

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

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**Executive Summary**

The Attainment of Industry-Recognized Credentials in Hawaiʻi's Education System report 2023-2024 details the data collection process, reporting requirements, and business rules that support the collection of student-level data that is disaggregated specifically for Hawaiʻi's population. The credentials included in this report are those that were identified through the Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi report, which utilized Hawaiʻi labor market data to identify the industry-recognized credentials with verifiable labor market value based on the credentials employers are requesting in job advertisements.

To track and report students' attainment of industry-recognized credentials, the Hawaiʻi State Department of Education (HIDOE) and the University of Hawaiʻi (UH) have developed various strategies and procedures to collect student-level data. Collecting and verifying student-level industry credentials attainment data is difficult because neither HIDOE or UH own this data as they do other educational attainment data such as degrees awarded. Strategies to overcome these challenges are detailed in this report. In this report, student attainment counts were suppressed due to small cell sizes (<5 numerator and/or <10 denominator) or as complementary suppression to protect individuals' privacy and confidentiality as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

As reported by HIDOE and UH, a total of 2,478 industry-recognized credentials were attained in the 2023-2024 academic year. HIDOE verified the credential attainment of a total of 1,912 industry-recognized credentials with the highest credential attainment in Food Handler's Cards (808), ServSafe Certification (776) and Basic Life Support Certification (310). The total number of attained credentials reported and verified by HIDOE in 2023-2024 increased 221% from 596 to 1,912. The biggest gains were seen in attainment of the ServSafe Certification (+588), Food Handlers Card (+430), and Basic Life Support Certification (+310). UH verified the credential attainment of a total of 566 industry-recognized credentials in the healthcare, skilled trades, and technology industries with the highest attainment in National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) (156) and Emergency Medical Technician (104). The total number of attained credentials reported and verified by UH in 2023-2024 increased 14.8% from 493 to 566. The biggest gains were in attainment of the Emergency Medical Technician certification (+28).

**Hawaiʻi's Education System**

*HRS §304A-304 Industry-recognized credentials; data collection* requires the State Board for Career and Technical Education (SBCTE) to ensure the collection and transparent reporting across relevant state educational systems and agencies. Currently, the only state agencies providing direct-to-student training on industry-recognized credentials are the Hawaiʻi State Department of Education (HIDOE) and the University of Hawaiʻi System (UH). This report consists of the individual attainment reports on industry-recognized credentials from HIDOE and UH.

**Defining an Industry-Recognized Credential**

As defined by the U.S. Department of Labor (2010), an industry-recognized credential is "an education- and work-related credential can be defined as a verification of an individual's qualification or competence issued by a third party with the relevant authority to issue such credentials." As referenced in Act 163 (21), the Promising Credentials Report, a collaborative project with Hawaiʻi P-20 Partnerships for Education, HIDOE, UH Community Colleges (UHCC), Hawaiʻi Department of Labor & Industrial Relations, the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaiʻi, and Kamehameha Schools, used Hawaiʻi labor market data, with occupational wage and demand thresholds, and local employer insight to identify the most promising industry-recognized credentials in Hawaiʻi. The initial Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi (2020) report identified 137 promising credentials. The Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi report is the only resource available that uses Hawaiʻi labor market data with clear methodology to identify industry-recognized credentials as having value to the holder in the Hawaiʻi labor market. The Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi report was updated in February 2023 and used as the basis to identify industry-recognized credentials that have labor market value to the holder.

It should be noted that the Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi report does not include diplomas and postsecondary degrees, such as associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees. Many occupations that ask for industry-recognized credentials often also require an accompanying level of education. Both HIDOE and UH publish regular reports of the number of diplomas and degrees awarded each year.

**Scope of Data Collection**

Since industry-recognized credentials are issued by a third party with relevant authority, individuals can prepare for and attempt industry credentials in a variety of ways. For example, an individual can engage in self-study using free online resources to prepare for the credential exam and earn the credential without participating in any formal education such as a college or university. Other private educational institutions, organizations, and businesses offer a variety of training opportunities and resources to those interested in preparing for specific industry-recognized credentials, which are outside of the State of Hawaiʻi's formal education system. Industry-recognized credential attainment data for students who prepare for credentials through self-study or outside of HIDOE and UH are not included in this report.

Some industry-recognized credentials, especially in the healthcare field, require students to complete an educational program, which holds a defined program accreditation, in order to attempt a credential. For example, to attempt the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) credential exam, a student must complete an educational program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM). Educational programs with program accreditations specific to the credential they are preparing students for are found both in public, private, and for-profit educational institutions. With credentials that require student completion of an accredited educational program, there is often some amount of credential attainment data sharing with the accredited educational program. In these cases, it is most common for student pass rates to be shared with the educational program; however, the student-level data is not included. For example, it may be reported that 15 of 17 students in an accredited educational program passed the credential exam, but it does not identify which students passed and which did not. Student pass rates without student-level data does not allow the educational program to disaggregate by gender and ethnicity. Additional efforts were made to collect student self-reported credential attainment data. In these situations where only credential pass rates are provided to the educational program and individual student self-reporting was unsuccessful, the credential attainment is included in the report with a gender and ethnic disaggregation as "unknown."

## Data Collection Challenges

As defined by the U.S. Department of Labor, industry-recognized credentials are issued by a third party with the relevant authority to issue such credentials. Individual vendors of credentials engage with those attempting credentials individually and most often outside of the educational systems. Since attainment of an industry-recognized credential is not typically a requirement of an educational program, if a student attempts an industry-recognized credential, it may be during or after completion of the associated course or program, which makes self-reported student attainment data especially difficult to collect. The UH System does receive some industry-recognized credential examination results from certifying entities, which are not always available at the student record level that would allow for disaggregation by race/ethnicity.

## Data Collection Strategies

HIDOE and UH were found to be the only state agencies providing direct educational and training related to industry-recognized credentials. Both HIDOE and UH employed a variety of strategies to collect student-level attainment data of industry-recognized credentials.

### *Data Collection Strategies - University of Hawai'i*

UH manages the approval and conferral of a wide range of academic credentials - defined as a degree, certificate, or other form of institutional-based acknowledgement or recognition of achievement. While the data collection and management processes for academic credentials *internal* to the UH System are robust, the data collection and management of *external* non-UH credentials are relatively weak and outside of the scope of existing UH institutional data stewardship infrastructure.

Pursuant to Act 163 (2021), UH partnered with the State Board for Career and Technical Education to track and report students' attainment of industry-recognized credentials as identified as high-value credentials in the Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi report (2020) (https://www.hawaiip20.org/PromisingCredentials/). External, promising credentials were cross-walked to both credit and non-credit academic programs at UH. A variety of data collection methods were utilized. The most effective method found was conducting an inventory of the academic programs that have access to the results of state or national licensure and/or certification examinations. For example, the test results of the NCLEX - Registered Nurse examinations are shared by the State of Hawaiʻi Professional and Vocational Licensing Division of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs with all Hawaiʻi Nursing programs. UH programs, similarly, receive the examination results from other national or state Boards or from certifying entities such as the National Registry for Emergency Medical Technicians. The data from these sources are complete and accurate, though not always available at the student record level that would allow disaggregation by race/ethnicity.

Data collection was also made via the UHCC Good Jobs Hawaiʻi program in the form of direct surveys to workforce training students. Additionally, UH also developed and launched a public website (https://irc.hawaii.edu/) where UH students could self-report and upload evidence of their attainment of external industry certifications. UHCC worked with CTE Deans and campus-level programs to encourage students to self-report their industry-recognized credential attainment. It is noted that attempting the industry credential exams are optional for most UH programs, and individuals may elect to attempt the industry credential exam after graduation which makes complete data collection challenging. Student responses from surveys and self-reporting were utilized but found to be less reliable than industry certification reports retrieved from certifying entities. Self-reported student data also carries more risk with respect to data quality, accuracy, and completeness.

### *Data Collection Strategies - Hawaiʻi State Department of Education*

Pursuant to Act 163 (2021), the HIDOE commissioned the creation of a credential attainment module within its Infinite Campus data system. The module was prepopulated with the credentials identified in the Promising Credentials in Hawaiʻi report (2020) to allow for school and program level data entry to individual students' records. Every HIDOE public high school identified a lead individual to coordinate collection and data entry on student record level attainment of industry-recognized credentials. Professional development on the data collection and reporting was provided by HIDOE's Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design (OCID).

To ensure quality of the self-reported attainment of industry-recognized credentials, schools were required to submit evidence that verified a student's attainment of the credential (e.g., a copy of the earned card or certificate). The reported data went through a three-step quality assurance process.

> **Step 1 (school level)**: At the school level, the identified lead on the collection and reporting of industry-recognized credentials verified that each reported student-attained

credential had a valid piece of evidence that documented attainment of an industry-recognized credential. School leads worked with their teachers and students to ensure valid evidence was submitted. Once verified at the school level, a report and associated evidence was submitted to OCID for a secondary verification.

**Step 2 (state level):** At the state level, HIDOE OCID staff conducted a second verification that each reported credential had valid evidence to ensure accuracy of the school-level reports and that only the verified data was entered into Infinite Campus.

**Step 3 (state level):** HIDOE OCID worked with the Office of Information Technology Services and Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance to extract the student-level data from Infinite Campus and verify that the data matched the validated reports collected from the schools. HIDOE OCID then compiled the data in the format published in this report

Only attained credentials that completed the three-step quality assurance process are included in the HIDOE industry-recognized credential attainment report.

**HIDOE - Attainment of Industry-Recognized Credentials (verified) 2023-2024**

Includes all courses with end dates between 7/1/2023 and 6/30/2024 where student reported and verified = Passed
Self-reported data that passed the HIDOE 2-Step Quality Review Process

| Credential | Total | Gender Unknown | Male | Female | Ethnicity/Race Unknown | American Indian/Alaska Native | Black/African American | Chinese | Filipino | Japanese | Korean | Indo Chinese | Other Asian | Hispanic Latino | Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | White | Two or More Races |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Healthcare** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification | 310 | 0 | 78 | 232 | 0 | 1 | * | * | 154 | 30 | * | 6 | * | * | 59 | 41 | 0 |
| Certified Clinical Medical Assistant | * | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * |
| Certified Medical Assistant | * | * | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 |
| Certified Nursing Assistant | 10 | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 |
| Certified Pharmacy Technician | * | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 |
| **Hospitality & Tourism** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Food Handler's Card | 808 | 0 | 399 | 409 | 0 | 6 | 38 | 13 | 204 | 50 | * | 5 | * | 19 | 292 | 164 | 9 |
| ServSafe Certification | 776 | 0 | 364 | 412 | 0 | * | 20 | 14 | 328 | 71 | * | * | * | 22 | 194 | 109 | 5 |
| **TOTAL** | **1912** | | **844** | **1068** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*data suppressed for counts <5

**UH - Attainment of Industry-Recognized Credentials (verified) 2023-2024**

Includes all courses with end dates between 7/1/2023 and 6/30/2024 where student reported Certification = Passed

| Credential | Total | Gender Unknown | Male | Female | Ethnicity/Race Unknown | American Indian/Alaska Native | Black/African American | Chinese | Filipino | Japanese | Korean | Indo Chinese | Other Asian | Hispanic Latino | Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | White | Two or More Races |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Healthcare** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Adult Residential Care Home Operator (ARCH) Certification | 22 | * | * | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | * | 0 | * | * |
| Certified Nursing Assistant | 85 | 0 | 10 | 75 | 0 | * | * | 31 | * | * | * | 0 | 0 | 26 | 11 | * | * |
| Certified Dental Assistant DANB | 12 | * | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | * | * |
| Certified Emergency Medical Technician NREMT | 104 | 89 | 10 | * | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | * | * | * |
| Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | * | * |
| Certified Medical Assistant | 18 | 0 | * | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 8 | * | 0 | 0 |
| Certified Pharmacy Technician | 9 | * | * | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | * | * |
| Certified Phlebotomy Technician | 9 | 0 | * | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 |
| American Registry of Radiologic Technologists Certification | 18 | 18 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Therapist Multiple-Choice Examination of the National Board for Respiratory Care | 13 | 13 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Licensed Practical Nurse | 38 | 38 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Registered Nurse License | 157 | 137 | * | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | * | * |
| **Hospitality** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ServSafe | 17 | * | * | 14 | 0 | * | * | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 8 | * | 0 | 0 |
| **Skilled Trades** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hawai'i State CDL, Class B License | 31 | 30 | * | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 10 | * | 0 | * |
| Certified Forklift Operator | 7 | 6 | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 |
| **Technology** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CompTIA A+ Certification | 9 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 | * |
| CompTIA Network+ Certification | * | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 |
| CompTIA Security+ Certification | * | * | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | * | * | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **566** | **92** | **174** | **300** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* data suppressed for counts <5