

# Building Connections

PREPARING FUTURE-READY GRADUATES

## Welcome

### SUMMER CERTIFICATION COURSES AND VIRTUAL HEALTHCARE FAIR

Welcome to the February edition of the “Building Connections” newsletter for the 2025-2026 school year!

This monthly resource provides career and college readiness materials for Catholic school leaders, students, educators, and families. This edition's spotlight is on new certification courses for students, a virtual healthcare fair for teachers and students, healthcare experienceships, and Fall 2025 post-secondary enrollment trends.

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*Mari K. Thomas, Ph.D.*

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS, CAREER PATHWAYS



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February 2026



## For Students

### SUMMER CREDENTIAL COURSES AND CINCINNATI FIRE CADET PROGRAM

We are excited to announce our upcoming certification courses for 2026. These programs offer a fantastic opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience, earn industry-recognized credentials, and learn from expert instructors across the region. Please review the schedule below for details on courses, dates, times, and location for each session:

Course	Dates	Times	Location	Instructor
CCMA - <a href="#">register</a>	February 18– June 25, 2026	4:00 PM-6:00 PM Wed/Fri	Great Oaks	Great Oaks
CNA - <a href="#">register</a>	June 1-16, 2026	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Great Oaks	Angela Hicks
CompTIA and Design Thinking - <a href="#">register</a>	June 15-18, 2026	8:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Location being finalized	Brandon Parker
OSHA 10 (with accommodations) - <a href="#">register</a>	June 8-12, 2026	8:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Cincinnati ToolBANK	Rob Rodgers

If you are interested in participating in one of the courses and have a question before you register, email [mthomas@cisekids.org](mailto:mthomas@cisekids.org).

**BONUS:** Applications are now open for the Cincinnati Fire Cadet Program. The Cadet Program is a PAID summer position for young people ages 14-18. To learn more, contact [firecadet@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:firecadet@cincinnati-oh.gov). or scan the QR code.



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## For Educators

2026 OHIO HEALTHCARE VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR

### Event Details:

- Wednesday, February 25, 2026
- 9:00–11:30 a.m.
- Virtual -Zoom Webinar

[Click here](#) for additional event details. [Click here](#) for a listing of additional experienceships from the Health Collaborative.

### Students will:

- Hear remarks from Governor Mike DeWine.
- Watch short, engaging videos that feature medical assistants, nurses, radiologic technologists, respiratory therapists, and surgical technologists.
- Participate in live Q&A sessions with healthcare professionals.
- Listen to a student sharing about his HOSA experiences.
- Learn about available education and training options from high school through college to pursue these careers.

### How to Participate:

- Register your classroom [here](#).
- Join the Zoom session on February 25. The event link will be emailed closer to the date.

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## For Community

### Undergraduate Enrollment: Community Colleges and Public 4-year Programs Lead the Way

The [Clearinghouse Enrollment Insights: Final Fall Enrollment Trends report](#) reveals total postsecondary enrollment in the U.S. increased by 1.0% in fall 2025, primarily due to growth in undergraduate enrollment at community colleges and public four-year institutions. This year's report uncovered a noteworthy shift in student enrollment patterns.

Total postsecondary enrollment is up 1.0% for Fall 2025, but the where and what students are studying is changing:

- Community Colleges are leading the charge with a 3.0% enrollment surge.
- Short-term certificates have grown nearly 30% since 2021 as students chase faster career paths.
- Health Professions and Traditional Engineering (Civil/Mechanical) are seeing double-digit gains.
- The Surprise: Computer Science enrollment fell across the board after years of steady growth.

In short, students are prioritizing affordability, flexibility, and direct-to-career skills.

Source: [National Student Clearinghouse Research Center](#)

Contact Us

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