

Compete Connect

April 3, 2024 Edition

From the CEO's Desk



Deborah L. Wince-Smith
President and CEO
Council on Competitiveness

Dear Colleagues,

In March, the Council had the privilege of attending the National Science Board's release of the *2024 Science & Engineering Indicators* at the White House and Congress. The Council, and I am sure many of you, rely on these indicators for high-quality benchmarks related to U.S. global competitiveness. There is a lot to sift through in the *2024 Indicators*, and reviewing the NSB's [key takeaways from the report](#) is a must.

In the *Indicators*, you will find important trends such as the decline in student math performance, increased international enrollment in U.S. graduate programs, growing private sector R&D investment, the significant reliance on foreign-born individuals in the STEM workforce and China's growing competitiveness in science, technology and innovation.

We are excited to join Chancellors Daniel Diermeier of Vanderbilt University and Donde Plowman of University of Tennessee, Knoxville in three weeks for our inaugural Competitiveness Conversations: ["Tennessee – Redefining Place & Building the Future Innovation Ecosystem for Mobility, Energy & Manufacturing."](#) We hope to see you there. The Council is also working with teams from the Mountain West and Midwest on plans for exciting Competitiveness Conversations, scheduled for August 6-9 at Boise State University and September 9-10 at Purdue University, respectively.

On a different thread, my recent article on [Forbes.com](#) underscores the remarkable contributions of women to societal advancement. From Hedy Lamarr's pioneering invention of frequency hopping communication to Grace Murray Hopper's groundbreaking work in computer programming, American women have profoundly

influenced the trajectory of science, technology and innovation.

Despite their significant impact on the U.S. science and technology landscape — including holding leadership positions at leading research universities and national laboratories — women remain underrepresented in the STEM workforce. To effectively tackle society's most pressing challenges and drive innovation on a larger scale, the United States must increase the participation of women in STEM fields. I explore this topic further in my latest [Forbes.com](#) article, and I encourage you to [read and share it](#).

Sincerely,

The Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith
President & CEO
Council on Competitiveness

Council News

Join Us for the Tennessee Competitiveness Conversation:
Shaping the Future of Innovation!



Join us for the Council's inaugural Competitiveness Conversation, themed "[Tennessee – Redefining Place and Building the Future Innovation Ecosystem for Mobility, Energy & Manufacturing](#)," happening on April 25-26 at Vanderbilt University. Co-hosted by Daniel Diermeier, Chancellor of Vanderbilt University, Donde Plowman, Chancellor of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Deborah Wince-Smith, this Conversation will convene members of the Council's Board, Membership, and National Commission, alongside a host of regional and national leaders and innovation stakeholders, to unpack Tennessee's emergence as a significant hub for innovation and how those lessons can be shared across the nation.

There are 13 engaging sessions planned, including a deep dive into “the pillars of innovation” that features:

- The Honorable Bill Lee, Governor of Tennessee
- Dan Helfrich, Chair and CEO of Deloitte Consulting LLP; Council on Competitiveness Business Vice-chair
- Chad Holliday, former Chair and CEO of DuPont; former Chair of Bank of

America and Royal Dutch Shell; and Council on Competitiveness Chair Emeritus

- Pablo Di Si, President & CEO of Volkswagen Group of America; CEO of Volkswagen Brand North American Region
- Jérémie Papin, Chairperson of Nissan Americas; Member of the Global Executive Committee & Sr. Vice President of Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.
- Paolo Ferrari, BSAM Executive Chairman of Bridgestone West; CEO of Bridgestone Corporation J GCOO
- Rob Carter, Executive Vice President of FedEx Information Services; Chief Information Officer of FedEx Corporation
- And many more leaders across the state and country

For more information on the Tennessee Competitiveness Conversation and updates on other Conversations being scheduled, contact Council EVP Chad Evans at cevens@compete.org.

Council Community News

Deloitte Consulting Named America's Best Management Consulting Firm

For the third consecutive year, Deloitte has been recognized as America's Best Management Consulting Firm. According to Forbes and Statista's joint survey, Deloitte's distinction stems from its deep industry knowledge and ability to offer clients objective market insights. Deloitte Consulting consultants bring years of experience not only in consulting but also in their specific industries. [Read the Forbes.com article here.](#)

Chancellor Joan Gabel Named to Pittsburgh Business Times Power 100

The Pittsburgh Business Times has honored Pitt Chancellor and Council on Competitiveness Academic Vice-chair Joan Gabel in its Pittsburgh Power 100 2024 list, which spotlights the city's most influential leaders. Chancellor Gabel was recognized for her leadership in advancing the Plan for Pitt 2028. Read more in [Pittwire](#).

Ancora Announces \$220 Million Investment for 11-story Lab & Office Building in New Haven

Council Member Josh Parker, CEO of Ancora, announced that his company will invest \$220 million in an 11-story lab and office building in New Haven, Connecticut. The decision is driven by Yale University's burgeoning bioscience sector, and the project aims to meet the growing demand for lab space from Yale-affiliated bioscience companies. With significant financial backing, Ancora's investment reflects New Haven's appeal to global investors and is a sign of the city's growing biotech cluster. [Read more here.](#)

University of Vermont's Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships to Tackle Challenges Faced by Rural Communities

Vermont organizations across various sectors will receive substantial support through the University of Vermont's Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships (LIRP). The institute has allocated over \$1.7 million in grants to over a dozen deserving projects statewide, covering areas such as community school building, clean energy, flood resilience, regenerative agriculture and health care access. Read more about this impactful initiative [here](#).

Council Member and National Commissioner Robert Johnson to Guide New Applied AI Hub in Massachusetts

Dr. Robert Johnson, President of Western New England University, has joined the Massachusetts Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategic Task Force to guide investments from a proposed \$100 million economic development bill to create an Applied AI Hub in Massachusetts. The Task Force will have subject-specific working groups to create recommendations to leverage AI in leading sectors, such as education, healthcare, life sciences, robotics and financial services. [Read the full announcement here](#).

The Confederation of Indian Private Universities Names Suresh Garimella as Chairperson to its International Advisory Council

Council Member Dr. Suresh Garimella, President of the University of Vermont, has been named Chairperson for the International Advisory Council. With a background in Mechanical Engineering, he's renowned for his research in energy efficiency and sustainable systems, publishing over 625 papers and holding 16 patents. Recognized by organizations like the National Academy of Inventors, he advises on science policy as a member of the National Science Board.

Texas Governor Appoints Texas A&M System Vice Chancellor for Research to the Texas Semiconductor Innovation Consortium Executive Committee

Dr. Joe Elabd, who is also the Interim Dean of the Texas A&M University College of Engineering, joins a range of leaders from across Texas – including those within the Texas A&M Semiconductor Institute – to build on the state's position as a leader in semiconductor research, manufacturing and design.

Competitiveness News

Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community

In February, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) released the

U.S. Intelligence Community's 2024 Annual Threat Assessment. From the preface: “Several states are engaging in competitive behavior that directly threatens U.S. national security while a larger set of states, including some allies, are facing intrastate conflict or domestic turmoil. These pressures and dynamics have the potential to spill over borders and across regions to destabilize areas and threaten the livelihoods, safety and stability of billions of people. China vies to surpass the United States in comprehensive national power and secure deference to its preferences from its neighbors and from countries around the world, while Russia directly threatens the United States in an attempt to assert leverage regionally and globally.” Read the [report here](#).

Council Insights

Blue Collar - Revival

Presented in Partnership with Keybridge Research

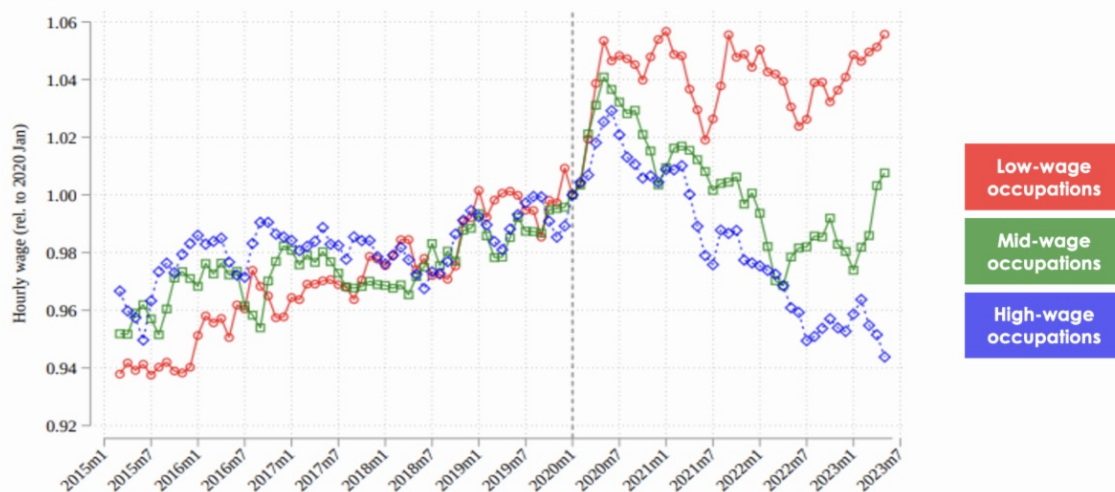
Rising income inequality over the past several decades — largely driven by diminished prospects for blue collar workers in the manufacturing and similar sectors — has created complex political, social and economic challenges. However, shifts in demand, demographics and digitization are set to boost blue collar wages in a significant way.

Large-scale fiscal and monetary stimulus, stemming from the COVID crisis, has driven historically low unemployment rates post-pandemic. Meanwhile, labor force growth has been steadily declining since the 1970s. In tandem, these factors have left companies scrambling to find service-sector, production and traditional blue-collar workers. Additionally, research suggests that the advent of generative AI will improve productivity and satisfaction among lower-wage occupations, with higher-wage workers bearing the brunt of job displacement and dislocation.

These dynamics are already driving wage growth amongst lower-wage occupations and workers in fields like manufacturing and construction can expect these trends to continue. As adoption of generative AI and other advanced technologies continues, effects on the broader labor market, the innovation ecosystem, and blue-collar workers in particular will continue to play out in interesting ways.

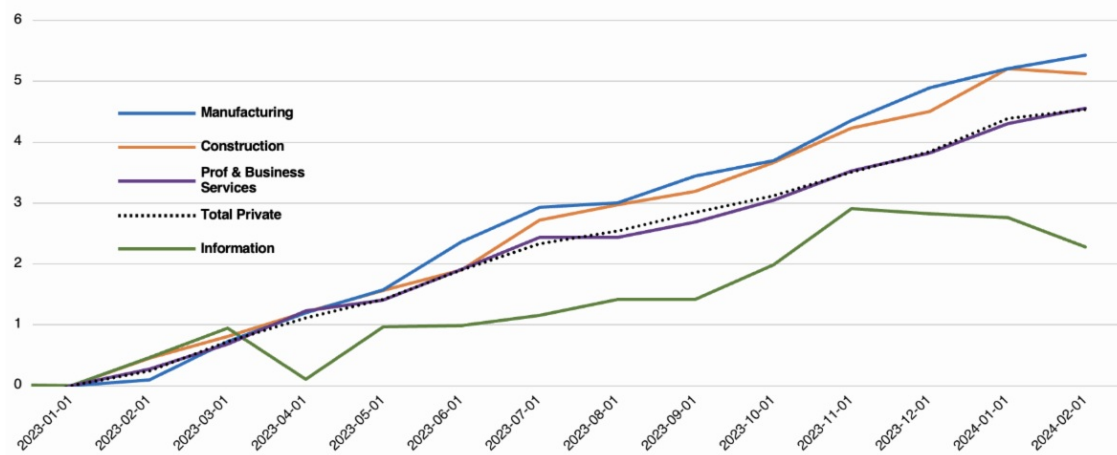
Lower-wage Occupations Are Seeing Faster Wage Growth

Real hourly wages by occupational wage tercile, indexed to January 2020



Blue Collar Occupations Benefit from Uneven Wage Growth

Hourly earnings by sector, indexed to January 2023



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, last updated March 8, 2024.

KEYBRIDGE
Public Policy Economics

New to the Community



Dr. Joan Ferrini-Mundy
President
University of Maine
Member

International

Universities are essential players in shaping future innovation in our interconnected world. They must move beyond traditional roles to actively engage with socio-economic ecosystems. This was highlighted in the "Universities in Action" report, documenting discussions from a forum co-organized by the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (GFCC) during the Innovation Partnerships Forum in Brazil. The forum emphasized the importance of cross-sector alliances for addressing systemic challenges such as climate change, economic instability, and security threats. Collaboration across sectors is crucial, as recognized by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Read the [Universities in Action](#)



Save the Date Global Innovation Summit 2024

November 11-15
Belfast



GIS
2024

CO-HOSTS



CONTACT US

CONNECT WITH COMPETE



The Council On Competitiveness | 900 17th St. NW, Suite 700, Washington , DC 20006

[Unsubscribe wwadmin@compete.org](mailto:wwadmin@compete.org)
[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by info@compete.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!