

TRANSFORMING HIRING & DIVERSIFYING TALENT *Tear The Paper Ceiling Campaign Overview*

The Issue

The U.S. labor market has a perceived shortage of qualified workers, yet millions of workers with in-demand skills are being overlooked, undervalued, and filtered out before even being considered. We call these over 70 million workers STARS: workers **S**killed **T**hrough **A**lternative **R**outes. STARS make up 50% of the U.S. workforce and have developed valuable skills through community college, workforce training, bootcamps, certificate programs, military service, or on-the-job learning, rather than through a bachelor's degree. The false assumption that no degree means no skills has had a severe, negative impact on STARS. The wage gap between STARS and workers with bachelor's degrees has doubled over the last 40 years. STARS now earn less –when adjusted for inflation – than they did in 1976.



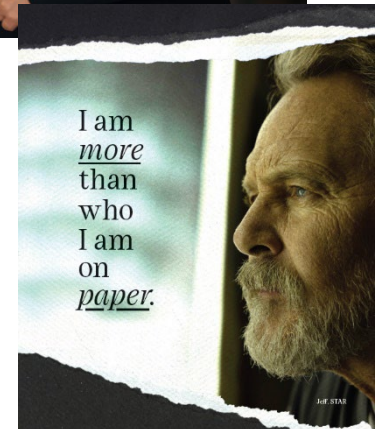
Campaign Objective

Shift perceptions and redefine the meaning of a “skilled worker” – a term that is overly associated with having a bachelor's degree – to unlock STARS as an overlooked and undervalued talent pool. STARS are missing out on opportunities for upward mobility that could change their careers, lives, and communities. By screening workers out based on a bachelor's degree, employers are missing out on a diverse, skilled talent pool and might not realize they are the solution to the talent shortage they are trying to solve.

Tear the Paper Ceiling

STARS face a “paper ceiling” – the invisible barrier that comes at every turn for workers without a bachelor's degree. Lack of alumni networks, biased algorithms, degree screens, stereotypes, and misperceptions all contribute to the paper ceiling, creating barriers to upward economic mobility for STARS, even though they have demonstrated skills for higher-wage work.

Workers and companies are uniting to tear the paper ceiling and create a new and more equitable future of work.



Target Audience

- Employers – Hiring influencers and decision makers at small, medium, and large businesses in the U.S.
- STARS – Rising STARS, the 30 million workers in the U.S. who have the skills to transition to an occupation in the next highest wage category

Main Message

50% of workers in America are STARS, workers Skilled Through Alternative Routes. It's time to let them shine. Join us in tearing the paper ceiling.

Call to Action

PSAs drive to [TearThePaperCeiling.org](https://tearthepaperceiling.org)

- Employers – Find out how STARS can meet your talent needs at [TearThePaperCeiling.org](https://tearthepaperceiling.org)
- STARS – Find resources for breaking through barriers at [TearThePaperCeiling.org](https://tearthepaperceiling.org)

PSAs

Access campaign assets on [AdCouncil.org](https://adCouncil.org).