In 2013, Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), a private, accredited, nonprofit university and the largest nonprofit provider of online education in New England, recognized an untapped talent pool already existing in the workforce—employees with strong leadership potential but nontraditional education backgrounds. Employers openly recognized the contributions these individuals made to their businesses but identified barriers to their career advancement owing to limited credentials and proficiency in critical skills.

In response, SNHU launched College for America (CfA), a nonprofit college offering associate’s and bachelor’s degrees earned by mastering key competencies through project-based experience, as opposed to traditional lectures and credit hours. CfA begins by recruiting employers and then designs programs targeted to incumbent workers who require flexible scheduling and clear career advancement opportunities to prompt their participation.

Costing just $2,500 per year, the program strikes a balance between cost, quality, and flexibility for employers and students/workers. In addition, the program is priced at or below the tuition reimbursement level of most employers and is the first of its kind to be eligible for federal student financial aid.

Learn more at TheTalentSupplyChain.org