American Graduate began in 2011, bringing the community together to improve high school graduation rates for our most vulnerable youth. In partnership with a network of trusted community organizations, Nine Network of Public Media created a consistent drumbeat of stories about young people and educators – stories that enabled partners to serve more students, teachers, and parents and helped activate community members to improve youth outcomes.

In 2017, American Graduate evolved to focus on what happens after young people graduate high school, specifically pathways to gainful employment in high-demand skilled careers. Our trusted partners inform our work, helping us understand opportunities young people have and challenges they face. The outcomes of our initiative were shaped by our partners’ two greatest challenges: awareness and perceptions of high-demand skilled work.

“American Graduate is an example of Nine’s ability to address issues that are important to the community.”

—Joseph Powers, Nine Network Member
OUTCOMES
When we are successful with American Graduate, we will:

• Increase awareness at scale of high-demand skilled careers
• Increase connection to training and educational pathways that lead to high-demand skilled careers
• Increase positive perceptions about the value of high-demand skilled careers—a changed narrative
• Make partner organizations more effective through increased public support and stronger and wider collaborative networks

BY THE NUMBERS
In our first year of American Graduate: Getting to Work:

• Nine Network broadcast
  1,369 STORIES

• Broadcast content was viewed
  2,986,002 TIMES

• Social media content reached roughly
  120,000 PEOPLE
  with more than 206,000 impressions

Nine Network of Public Media created a model for how we engage our community around important issues.

NINE NETWORK MODEL FOR ENGAGEMENT
NINE NETWORK FACILITATES AT SCALE A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION THAT CREATES CHANGE.

DEVELOP ONGOING RELATIONSHIPS
COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
CONVENE PARTNERS

UNDERSTAND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES & THEMES
• Inform content
• Build networks
• Common goals
• Key themes
• Initiative and/or issue specific
• Ongoing

CONTENT CREATION AND DISTRIBUTION

CONTENT
• Content tied to the community priorities and themes.
• Share across all Nine and community platforms and pathways.

IMPACT
• Increased awareness
• Increased understanding and connection
• Individual and community action

MEASURE
• Surveys (quarterly, partners, events)
• Analytics (social, viewership)
• Focus Groups, Interviews

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“IT FEELS LIKE WE ARE PART OF A GREATER COLLECTIVE.”

– TRINA CLARK JAMES, NPOWER
PARTNERS

Accenture
Affton School District
Bi-State Development
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri
BJC School Outreach
Black Leadership Roundtable St. Louis
Boys and Girls Club of Greater St. Louis
Building Union Diversity
Christian Hospital Foundation
Clayco
College Bound
Construction Forum St. Louis
East Central College
Exploring Greater St. Louis Area
Family and Workforce Centers of America
Ferguson-Florissant School District
Hazelwood School District
Jefferson College
Jennings School District
Launch Code
Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois
Madison County Employment and Training
MERS Goodwill
Metropolitan Employment and Training Center
Midwest Cyber Center
Mission St. Louis

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
North County Technical High School
NPower St. Louis
Parkway School District
Project Lead the Way
Ranken Technical College
Ritenour School District
The School District of University City
South County Technical High School
St. Charles County Workforce & Business Development
St. Clair County IGD – Workforce Development Group
St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment
St. Charles Community College
St. Louis College of Pharmacy
St. Louis Community College
St. Louis County Division of Workforce Development
St. Louis Economic Development Partnership
St. Louis Graduates
St. Louis Internship Program
St. Louis Job Corps Center
St. Louis Public Schools
St. Louis Regional Chamber
St. Louis Youth Build
St. Louis Youth Jobs
State of Missouri Division of Workforce Development
United Way – Ready By 21
University of Missouri – St. Louis
Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis
US Department of Labor – Office of Apprenticeships

"IT FEELS LIKE WE ARE PART OF A GREATER COLLECTIVE."
– TRINA CLARK JAMES, NPower
LIVING ST. LOUIS SPECIAL
An example of the kind of in-depth stories we tell – Nine Network produced and aired *The Skills Gap: A Living St. Louis Special*. There are many pathways young people can take to find a steady, well-paying job, and many do not require a 4-year degree. This special explores these opportunities through the lens of our regional economy and the changing job market.

VIGNETTES
Short messages about career pathways air in heavy rotation throughout the day on three channels enabling maximum exposure. These messages include information about high-demand careers and pathways to training and resources that are available to job seekers in the St. Louis region.

WORKING ST. LOUIS
Our Working St. Louis Digital Series, which is promoted on social media and through our partner network, is in its third season. With 23 episodes in its first year, this series explores career pathways available in the St. Louis region. People in the St. Louis region, already successfully employed, answer questions about what they do, why, and how they get there. These short videos offer viewers insight into high-demand skilled career pathway, the variety of these pathways, and the diversity of the people who work in them.
WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY ABOUT AMERICAN GRADUATE...

100% OF PARTNERS STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE that their organization’s partnership with their public media station HAS HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT on their organization.

97% OF PARTNERS STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE that their organization IS BETTER ABLE TO NETWORK AND CONNECT WITH OTHERS promoting high-demand skilled careers because of their public media station.

100% OF PARTNERS STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE that their public media station IS A VALUED PARTNER IN PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING AWARENESS of workforce development issues in their community.

66% OF PARTNERS SHARED THEIR PUBLIC MEDIA STATION’S AMERICAN GRADUATE CONTENT (as it relates to high-demand skilled jobs) with the people their organization serves.

“Keep up the great work, American Graduate is continuing to grow in name recognition over on this side of the Mississippi and it has helped to bring more attention (and discussion) to the skills gap we’re all facing. And even more importantly, some possible solutions!”

– MATT JONES, ST. CLAIR COUNTY IGD – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GROUP
“Public media is invaluable to everybody in the United States. I cannot tell you how many times since our program was featured on American Graduate – on the Living St. Louis Special – that I’ve been approached by neighbors, by colleagues in the industry, people whom I don’t even know that have recognized me… I experienced the reach of [Nine Network] and how much it has been beneficial for our students, been beneficial for our donors and getting more donations, shedding light on our industry issues, and the workforce shortage or crisis.”

– DAN LESTER, CLAYCO