



# 2021 Postsecondary Career and Technical Education Research Fellow

**Andrew Gardner**

Dissertation Research Fellow, UNC Charlotte

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Belk Center  
for Community College  
Leadership and Research

**Bio.** Andrew Gardner is a doctoral candidate at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte pursuing the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (Higher Education) program. Since 2014, Andrew has been a full-time staff member at Montgomery Community College in Troy, NC. His roles have included Director of Business & Industry Services and Dean of Continuing Education. Andrew has a Master’s in Business Administration (MBA) from Southern New Hampshire University, and a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration from George Mason University. Andrew has led and collaborated on numerous initiatives that promoted the development of a more skilled workforce. The various initiatives and boards he contributes to include Montgomery County Business Advisory Council, Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Member, Montgomery County Schools Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce Member, Co-Chair of the Piedmont Regional Workforce Alliance, Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grant Department of Labor initiative, and the Apprenticeship Montgomery initiative. He is a proud graduate of the North Carolina Community College Leadership program and is always ready to make a difference.

**Project.** Andrew’s research focuses on the lived experiences of four DACA recipients that pursued noncredit occupational training opportunities at a community college in North Carolina. Andrew utilizes an adapted in-depth qualitative interview study to explore these experiences. The purpose of the study is to understand what experiences led DACA recipients to enroll in noncredit occupational education in the community college setting, insight about their educational experiences in higher education, and how they used the education; they gained through noncredit occupational education.



Research Sponsor: Mark M. D’Amico, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Higher Education  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

## The Program

Fellows will be part of a community that participates in two national research training institutes, research methods webinars, works with CTE research mentors, and conducts postsecondary CTE research.

“We have designed this CTE Fellows program to provide scholars with the unique opportunity to be part of a community and a formal curriculum to develop their research skills while working toward improving the field of CTE.” — James Bartlett II, Ph.D.,  
Principal Investigator

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