

WORKPLACES

Ahren Harrison, 18, stands near the grapple skidder he's learning to operate in the Maine Community College System's mechanized logging operations program.



# JAMIE DIMON

THE FUTURE OF WORK  
IS SKILLS—  
SO STOP WORRYING  
ABOUT DEGREES

In the next decade, companies will stop relying on the outdated notion that you need a four-year college degree to be qualified for a decent job. At JPMorgan Chase, more than three-quarters of the jobs posted last year did not require a bachelor's degree.

**A** FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE degree is not the only path to a well-paying job. This outdated thinking is partially to blame for holding back America's growth and blocking many people's access to opportunity. We must consider more inclusive means of hiring the best and most talented people to meet the needs of our rapidly changing economy.

The reality is the future of work is about skills, not just degrees. To be clear, we continue to value college and advanced degrees, and there's no question of their relevance. But the talent that fuels a global company like ours is increasingly diverse and includes people who do not have a four-year college education.

As technology changes the way we work, we must be better at providing pathways to good jobs that everyone—no matter their zip code or background—can access.

To start, this is only possible if businesses and educators work together, partnering to develop curriculums and apprenticeships that offer students on-the-job experience and training. In the Washington, D.C., area, this approach has taken root. Employers are working alongside high schools, community colleges, and universities to prepare students to fill well-paying technology jobs including 30,000 open cybersecurity jobs in

Northern Virginia alone. Community colleges, which are an affordable and attainable option, exist in nearly every community, educate 13 million diverse students a year, and are often overlooked as a source of talent.

Last year, more than three-quarters of the U.S. jobs posted at JPMorgan Chase did not require a bachelor's degree. Schools such as Columbus State Community College in Ohio are increasingly valuable resources for our company and many other employers, from technology to advanced manufacturing and health care. In the next decade, we must eliminate the stigma of community college.

Finally, with about 7 million job openings and 6 million unemployed workers in the U.S., people with criminal backgrounds deserve the same opportunity to obtain in-demand skills and good jobs as anyone else.

Returning citizens deserve a chance to secure a job at any company, including ours. We must eliminate barriers to their employment too, by increasing access to Pell Grants and financial aid, and dropping questions about criminal backgrounds from job applications. Hiring them and developing their skills is good for business and the right thing to do.

JAMIE DIMON is the chairman and CEO of JPMorgan Chase.