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President Trump Signs Executive Order On Job Training

President Donald Trump holds up an Executive Order he signed that establishes a National Council for the American Worker, during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, July 19, 2018. (Photo/AP)

President Trump signs an executive order promoting job training at a Pledge to America's Workers event at the White House Thursday.

The executive order establishes a national council for U.S. workers and aims to equip students and workers with skills they need to thrive in the modern economy.

The council will help ensure Americans have access to affordable and relevant job training.

A number of company representatives at the event, including General Motors and Lockheed Martin, signed a pledge to help advance workforce development.

The president says the pledge will help provide nearly four million new job opportunities to American students workers over the next five years.

In the run-up to Thursday's announcement, R. Alexander Acosta, the labor secretary, announced \$150 million in funding pegged to a June 2017 executive order that was intended to strengthen apprenticeship programs targeting new industries, veterans and their spouses, women, people of color, and ex-offenders.

"It isn't as massive as I'd like to see, but there is a lot of activity going on now at the federal and state levels on apprenticeships and worker training," said Bob Lerman, a fellow at the nonpartisan Urban Institute who studies apprenticeship programs. "It's all helpful, even if I'd like to see something that is a little better coordinated."

Mr. Trump will also convene an advisory panel of industry, union



President Donald Trump holds up an Executive Order he signed that establishes a National Council for the American Worker, during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, July 19, 2018. (Photo/AP)

and corporate leaders to ensure that federal programs are more closely aligned to the labor demands of industry. In June, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that there were 6.7 million job openings, with only 6.4 million workers available to fill them.

"Today, 23 companies and associations are pledging to expand apprenticeships. That's an interesting word for me to be saying, right? 'The Apprentice,'" Mr. Trump said at a White House signing ceremony.

"I never actually put that together until just now," he said, calling to his daughter Ivanka, who is working on the jobs initiative. "Isn't that strange? Ivanka, I never associated, but here we are."

The initiative is meant to underscore Mr. Trump's commitment to the mainly working-class "forgotten Americans" whom Republicans are hoping to attract in the 2018 midterm elections, aides said.

"Every day we are getting our

forgotten Americans off the sidelines," the president said.

True to Mr. Trump's "Apprentice" reference, Thursday's ceremony had the pomp of a reality-show reveal episode. The trade association officials, corporate executives, union leaders and politicians sat at a table and signed, one by one, a "Pledge to America's Workers," promising to "create enhanced career opportunities," beneath a gilded presidential seal.

It is not clear exactly how many workers will be assisted by the pledges made on Thursday. Companies made their commitments in terms of slots — placements in various programs — with Walmart vowing to create a million such opportunities, and a buildings trade union promising another half-million.

Most of the companies and organizations in attendance had already planned to greatly increase their job training and apprenticeship programs, as part of an effort to counter what many business executives see as a labor crisis that could limit their growth.

White House staff members had initially asked participants to base their numerical pledges on the number of apprenticeship slots their organization planned to set aside. That number totaled about 500,000, according to two trade association representatives.

But earlier this week, aides to Mr. Trump, apparently disappointed with that number, expanded the definition of "career oppor-

tunities" to include many other initiatives, including retraining of workers inside companies for different jobs, continuing education programs and other measures intended to burnish worker skills.

Trade groups like the Aerospace Industry Association included new initiatives to create skills certification programs that would be portable from company to company.



Ivanka Trump has been working on President Trump's jobs initiative. (Photo/The New York Times)

The order creates a Council for the American Worker, led by the secretaries of commerce and labor, that will focus on consolidating existing federal programs and funding new job training initiatives, with a special concentration on expanding apprenticeship programs and retraining older workers without college degrees.

As part of the effort, companies and trade unions have committed to funding nearly four million slots for apprenticeships, retraining and continuing education programs over the next five years.

Job training has emerged as one of the few coordinated policy initiatives generated in the West Wing

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The President's Executive Order on job training.

"I never actually put that together

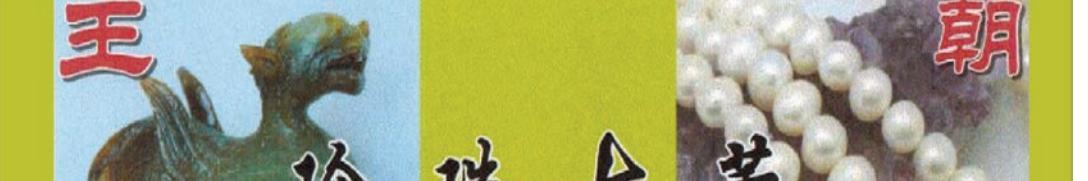
(Courtesy New York Times)



President Donald Trump signs an executive order on Thursday in the Roosevelt Room of the White House.

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• Former Rockets Star Yao Ming Fulfills Promise, Gets College Degree



• Mayor Turner's Former Press Secretary Indicted For Withholding Public Records



Inside C2

Former Rockets Star Yao Ming Fulfils Promise, Gets College Degree



SHANGHAI, CHINA - JULY 08: Former NBA player Yao Ming attends the 2018 undergraduate graduation ceremony of Shanghai Jiao Tong University on July 8, 2018 in Shanghai, China. (Photo by Zhang Haohao/VCG)

SHANGHAI, CHINA - JULY 08: Former NBA player Yao Ming attends the 2018 undergraduate graduation ceremony of Shanghai Jiao Tong University on July 8, 2018 in Shanghai, China. (Photo by Zhang Haohao/VCG)

Basketball Hall of Famer Yao Ming made more than \$93 million in his nine-year stint with the Houston Rockets, yet he still took the time to fulfill a promise he made to his parents by earning a college degree.

And, this wasn't some honorary degree that universities occasionally give to celebrities. The 37-year-old actually wrote

the papers and took the tests.

After retiring at 30 due to a series of injuries that derailed his NBA career, Yao enrolled in China's Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2011. Due to time spent on charity work, it took Yao seven years to finish all his courses, but he earned his degree in economics on Sunday.

"At a certain stage in the future, you should try to combine your future with the future of the society, because that's how you can find larger space for yourself to explore," Yao said in a speech at the graduation ceremony.

The 7-foot-6 Yao was the No. 1 overall pick by the Rockets at the age of 21 in 2002. He was an eight-time All-Star with the Rockets and made All-NBA second team twice (2007 and 2009) and All-NBA third team three times (2004, 2006 and 2008). Yao had several injuries in his career, including fracturing his left foot three different times, that forced him to retire early.

Yao was inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 2016 and the Rockets retired his number in 2017. (Courtesy Houston Chronicle)

Mayor Turner's Former Press Secretary Indicted For Withholding Public Records



Darian Ward, Mayor Sylvester Turner's former press secretary, shown here in 2016 photo. (Photo/Houston Chronicle)

Mayor Sylvester Turner's former press secretary, Darian Ward, was indicted by a grand jury this week, accused of violating state law by failing to turn over public records in response to a reporter's request late last year.

The indictment, handed up Thursday and released by Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg's office, says Ward misrepresented the number of emails responsive to a reporter's request for correspondence about her personal business activities and unlawfully withheld public records.

Ward resigned in January, weeks after news broke that she had been suspended

for withholding the records, and because the records showed she routinely had conducted personal business on city time.

Ward, who had joined former mayor Annise Parker's staff as press secretary in 2014 and served in the same role for Turner, sent or received roughly 5,000 pages of emails about personal business from her government account over the last four years of her tenure at the city. Many of those dealt with reality shows she was pitching to television networks or a charity for which she served as an adviser. (Courtesy Houston Chronicle)

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EDITOR'S CHOICE PICTURES



Singer Tom Jones, 78, Cancels UK Shows Due To Bacterial Infection. Jones performs on stage during the Bambi 2017 Awards ceremony in Berlin, Germany November 16, 2017. (Photo/REUTERS)



President Trump Welcomes Possible 2020 Run By Former Vice President Biden



Bodysuits, Boots And Masks Galore As Comic-Con Opens In San Diego



League And Union 'Working On A Resolution' To Anthem Issue



President Nixon greets the Apollo 11 astronauts aboard the U.S.S. Hornet while they were under post-space quarantine. Friday was the 49th anniversary of Apollo 11 moon landing.



Storm sinks duck boat in Missouri, killing 13 people, including children

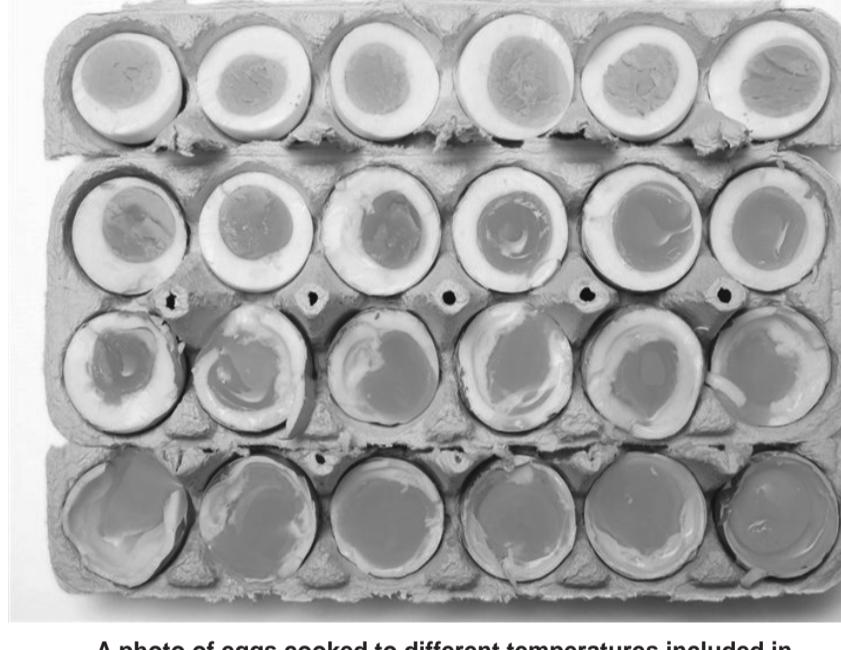


First Lady Melania Trump Continues To Push "Be Best" Campaign At Microsoft

Researchers trying to figure out how meat causes heart disease came up with another possible explanation last week: an essential nutrient found in meat and eggs might be a culprit. They found evidence that choline may feed gut bacteria that in turn produce a compound that makes blood sticky and prone to form clots that can cause heart attacks and strokes.

It's the latest in their series of studies looking at what specific compounds in food raise people's risk of heart disease, the no. 1 cause of death in the U.S. and much of the world. Choline is considered an essential nutrient and getting too little can, ironically, lead to heart disease, cancer and other conditions. It's found in abundant quantities in egg yolks, liver, red meat, peanuts and wheat germ. Dr. Stanley Hazen of the Cleveland Clinic and colleagues did a small but intense study in 18 volunteers — eight of them vegetarians or vegans, and 10 people who eat meat, eggs and dairy. They gave all 18 choline supplements — 500 mg daily. The recommended adequate intake of choline from all sources is 425 mg a day for women and 550 mg a day for men.

"Unless prescribed by your doctor, avoid supplements with choline."



A photo of eggs cooked to different temperatures included in "The Food Lab" by J. Kenji López-Alt. J. Kenji López-Alt / W.W. Norton and Company

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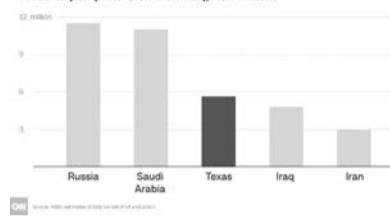
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The shale oil boom has brought a gold rush mentality to the Lone Star State, which is home to not one but two massive oilfields. Plunging drilling costs have sparked an explosion of production out of the Permian Basin of West Texas. In fact, Texas is pumping so much oil that it will surpass OPEC members Iran and Iraq next year, HSBC predicted in a recent report. If it were a country, Texas would be the world's No. 3 oil producer, behind only Russia and Saudi Arabia, the investment bank said. "It's remarkable. The Permian is nothing less than a blessing for the global economy," said Bob McNally, president of Rapidan Energy Group, a consulting firm. The hyper growth out of Texas is needed because oil prices have risen sharply and major players like Saudi Arabia are quickly maxing out their production.



Much of the excitement in Texas centers around the Permian Basin. Some oil execs believe the amount of oil in the Permian rivals Saudi Arabia's Ghawar Field, the world's largest conventional oilfield.

Rapid technological advances have dramatically brought down the cost of pumping oil everywhere, especially out of the Permian. Wells there can be profitable below \$40 a barrel. "The industry cracked the code on fracking," said McNally. The rise of Texas, which is also home to the Eagle Ford oilfield in the state's south, shows how the shale oil revolution has reshaped the global energy landscape. The United States is pumping more oil than ever before, making it less reliant on the turbulent Middle East for imports. "It's not going to make the world peaceful, but it will make it less volatile," said McNally, a former White House official. Scott Sheffield, the chairman of major Permian player Pioneer Natural Resources (PXD), told CNNMoney last month that the United States will become the world's biggest oil producer by the fall. The combined output of the Permian and Eagle Ford is expected to rise from just 2.5 million barrels per day in 2014 to 5.6 million barrels per day in 2019, according to HSBC. That means Texas will account for more than half of America's total oil production. By comparison, Iraq's daily production is seen