Certificates are a specific, highly specialized and quickly growing subset of online degree programs. Once considered with some uncertainty, such programs are now supported by many well-respected and sought-after employers. Students are flocking to new pathways, and employers are seeing benefits to bridging the skills gap quickly.

Distance learning is highly desirable to nontraditional students. From delayed starters to those switching careers, they are an incredibly diverse group.

With an aging population, healthcare careers are in demand. "Bringing the pipeline forward" to these careers has become a priority for employers. HigherEdGrowth.com, a leading higher education data and research company, has been tracking online degree program growth and trends since 2010. The data shows that in 2016, 9% of all postsecondary enrollments were in certificates. This is in sharp contrast to an analysis of online degree enrollment data from 2010, which showed that certificates comprised 3% of all postsecondary enrollments.

In 2018, more big-name employers and institutions collaborated in an effort to offer joint certificate programs in specific highly technical "skills gap" areas. Here are some new programs just announced this year:

1. Digital Marketing Certificate
   - 1,200 certificates earned
   - 40,000+ students enrolled
   - Within first 5 months
2. Entry-level IT Professional Certificate
3. Cloud Computing Certificate
4. App Development with Swift curriculum
5. Blockchain

For more information about boosting career advancement opportunities and enhancing the workforce of the future, contact HigherEdGrowth.com.