

KentuckianaWorks | Kentuckiana Builds

Louisville, Kentucky

Background

The Kentuckiana Builds program was developed by and is managed through a partnership between the Louisville Urban League and KentuckianaWorks, the workforce development board for the Louisville region.

While the program has origins in rebuilding the construction sector and responding to a decline in union jobs in the aftermath of the Great Recession, it was relaunched in 2016 with an explicit focus on increasing the number of Black Louisvillians in construction jobs. Kentuckiana Builds continues to receive funding from state discretionary spending and from grant applications submitted by the Urban League, the latest of which secured funding equivalent to the next five years of program operations.

Program Overview

Transportation Construction Policies

KentuckianaWorks and the City of Louisville have several multi-year major capital investment initiatives forthcoming in the region through which the program aims to increase the number of minority contractors and construction workers associated with these local projects.

Kentuckiana Builds has adopted a model of coordinating with local contractors to create a pipeline of underrepresented construction workers in both union and non-union positions. KentuckianaWorks is focused on continuing to build partnerships with unions in the region. 78 program graduates currently work in registered apprenticeship programs.

Messer Construction, one of Kentucky's largest construction companies, has served as a major partner for Kentuckiana Builds; of approximately 200 people on the contractor's team in the Louisville market, roughly 25% of their employees are graduates of the program. Regionally, the general contractors collaborating with Kentuckiana Builds continue to win contracts based on their relationship with the Urban League and the program, demonstrating a clear incentive for participation.

Workforce Development Program

Kentuckiana Builds is a six-week construction trade pipeline program focused primarily on placing people of color and women in the construction sector. Upon completion of the program, graduates earn the Core Curriculum certification from the National Center for Construction Education and

These case studies are deeper dives on the construction workforce practices of entities that have recently been awarded DOT grants through the RAISE and INFRA programs. These case studies were authored by Tanya Budler and Marlee Stark while they served as fellows through the Harvard Project on Workforce Summer Fellowship. The checklist used is explained in their full report: [Creating Equitable Access to Quality Construction Jobs](#).

Best Practices Checklist

Local Hire Provisions

- Geographic/residency
- Individual characteristics
- Employment mandates
- Penalties enacted if targets not met
- Employment goals

Job Quality

- Project labor agreement
- Registered apprenticeship targets
- Union partnerships

Workforce Development

- Direct-to-employment
- Underrepresented population recruitment
- Commitment to racial equity
- Supportive services

Research, OSHA-10, and First Aid/CPR certifications in addition to receiving job counseling, on-the-job training, and shadowing opportunities. As the program was reintroduced in 2016, KentuckianaWorks collaborated with larger general contractors and registered apprenticeship programs in the region. Completion of the Kentuckiana Builds program also provides graduates with 12 credit hours at Jefferson Community and Technical College.

KentuckianaWorks provides job training and support services to residents of Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, and Trimble counties through remote and in-person offerings at its network of centers across the region. Program officials note that most participants in the program face profound barriers to employment through traditional avenues, and support services focus on tackling pervasive problems such as eviction and limited access to transportation.

Accountability Metrics

In April 2019, workforce development organizations in Kentucky and Indiana signed a Bi-State Regional Workforce Plan, the first of its kind to be created under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The plan underscores the need for intra-state coordination given that the 13 counties within the Louisville Metropolitan Statistical Area share a labor market across state lines. As a co-signatory of the plan, KentuckianaWorks has committed to share data and collaborate with regional partners to improve the regional employment pipeline, including that of the construction sector.

Since 2016, the program has graduated 451 students from the Kentuckiana Builds program and an overall construction job placement conversation rate of 74% (334 students, underscoring gains in placement as relationships with unions and apprenticeship programs strengthen over time. Of the 451 program graduates, 396 (88%) students identify as racial or ethnic minorities, and 110 (25%) graduates are women.

KentuckianaWorks's 2021 Strategic Plan outlines the organization's desire to prioritize maximizing impact for Black community members. This strategic priority includes developing targeted communications materials to target Black jobseekers and investigating options for redirecting Board resources to better serve Black program participants in the region. As part of the racial equity pillar outlines in its 2021 Strategic Plan, KentuckianaWorks developed a racial equity dashboard to track demographic information for all programs managed by KentuckianaWorks. The dashboard provides both aggregate reporting and measures disaggregated at the program level. During Program Year 2020-2021, 80% of Kentuckiana Builds participants were Black and 25% were women. Kentuckiana Builds likewise monitors and publicly reports average wages for program participants; Black students and women earned an average hourly wage of \$16.48 and \$15.82 respectively in the latest program year.

Tip from the Team

Viewing the program for the perspective of the trainee is critical. Program leaders were keenly aware that potential and current program participants faced multiple community-level problems, including public unrest over the death of Breonna Taylor and racially and socioeconomically disparate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The team adapted quickly, diligently securing digital connectivity to offer distance learning and even issuing socially distanced tests to participants in a center parking lot

during a snowstorm. Program officials continue to seek ways to break down seemingly small barriers that function as dead-ends (e.g., providing transport to the state agency which grants birth certificate copies to enable a prospective participant to secure the identification document required to enroll in the program).

The City of New York HireNYC Construction Careers

New York, New York

Background

HireNYC is a suite of initiatives designed to leverage the City’s purchasing power and economic investments to create employment opportunities for low-income New Yorkers and help businesses access qualified talent. The program covers multiple agencies and leverages the City’s investment in Goods and Services contracts, Development investments, Human Services contracts, and Construction contracts to prioritize hiring of low-income workers.

HireNYC Construction Careers initiative was created in partnership with the Building and Construction Trades Council (BCTC) through the City’s Project Labor Agreements (PLAs). The program includes a commitment to create new pathways to apprenticeship opportunities in the unionized construction trades for low-income New Yorkers and NYCHA residents and to create jobs for workers from the target population on covered construction projects.

Program Overview

Transportation Construction Policies

Signed in 2020, the City’s PLAs include the newly formed HireNYC Construction Careers program that introduces the historic goal for at least 30% of all labor hours be worked by workers living within zip codes where at least 15% of residents living in such zip code are below the federal poverty rate or who are residing in NYCHA housing regardless of zip code. In addition, the PLA sets forth a goal that 30% of those hours (or 9% of total hours) go towards apprentices from the same populations.

With a strong union culture, the City ensured the PLA was aligned with union priorities to further guarantee a healthy pipeline of workers. Within the PLA, local unions have committed to designate a HireNYC Construction Careers lead representative to work closely with the City to ensure their referral systems are equipped to prioritize the referral of low-income workers onto City covered contracts. The agreement also includes a commitment for the City and unions to work with the affiliated pre-apprenticeship programs to conduct targeted recruitment for workers from low-income neighborhoods and ensure there are dedicated slots within the unions for new apprentices.

Workforce Development Program

Best Practices Checklist	
Local Hire Provisions	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Geographic/residency
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individual characteristics
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment mandates
<input type="checkbox"/>	Penalties enacted if targets not met
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Employment goals
Job Quality	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project labor agreement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Registered apprenticeship targets
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Union partnerships
Workforce Development	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Direct-to-employment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Underrepresented population recruitment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commitment to racial equity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive services

Through commitments in the City PLAs and City funding, HireNYC Construction Careers partners with the Apprenticeship Readiness Collective (ARC), a group of union recognized pre-apprenticeship programs that connect directly with workforce development programs to ensure residents of underrepresented backgrounds have access to good jobs in the construction industry. This includes recruiting at Workforce1 career centers that are based in underserved communities and partnering with trusted community groups to identify potential program participants. This recruitment approach has been particularly successful for engaging justice-involved individuals, women, NYCHA residents, youth, and veterans.

Target Population	Workforce Development Program	Direct Entry Apprenticeship Reservations
Graduates of NYC Public High Schools	The Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills (C-SKILLS)	20%
Veterans	NYC Helmets to Hardhats	10%
Women	Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW)	15%
NYCHA and Section 8 Residents	C-SKILLS, NEW, the NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA) or Pathways to Apprenticeships (P2A)	10%
Justice-Involved Individuals	C-SKILLS, NEW, NRTA, or P2A	10%

Accountability Metrics

HireNYC and its partners are committed to serving unrepresented populations and do so by targeting their recruitment efforts in low-income communities. This includes recruiting at Workforce1 career centers that are based in underserved communities and partnering with trusted community groups to identify potential program participants including justice-involved individuals.

Centrally collecting comprehensive data on program outcomes is one potential augmentation to the existing HireNYC program, and local leaders are also considering strategies like requiring hiring plans in bidding documents to encourage a more standardized approach.

Tip from the Team

Partnership with BCTC and their affiliated unions has been essential to our HireNYC Construction Careers program. Additionally, we strive to find creative ways to leverage the size of government projects to expand opportunities for underrepresented populations.

San Diego Association of Governments | WORC Pre-Apprenticeship Program

San Diego, California

Background

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the primary transportation planning agency for the San Diego metropolitan area. In 2021, SANDAG released its 2021 Regional Plan, which outlined a long-term vision for transportation, housing, and air quality in the San Diego region.

SANDAG works to advance workforce equity in the construction space through the Workforce Opportunities for Rising Careers (WORC) program, which is inclusive of the SANDAG Community Benefits Agreement, a Pre-Apprenticeship Program, and other associated initiatives.

Program Overview

Transportation Construction Policies

SANDAG's CBA became effective in May 2022 as a result of collaboration with the San Diego County Building and Construction Trades Council. The CBA stipulates the following hiring goals for all construction projects with an estimated contract award value of \$5 million or greater:

- 30% of total hours worked by Disadvantaged Workers (individuals from low-income areas or veterans residing anywhere)
- 10% total hours worked performed by Targeted Workers (veterans, apprentices with less than 15% of required hours, individuals without a high school diploma or GED, those experiencing homelessness, former foster youth, single parents, those unemployed or receiving government assistance, low-income individuals, formerly incarcerated individuals, or MC3 Pre-Apprenticeship graduates)

In addition to the hiring goals above, the CBA's key components include both union and non-union contractors; all state and federally approved apprenticeship programs; additional flexibility for disadvantaged businesses in relation to hiring and benefit contributions; and WORC program initiatives. The CBA was developed by and is executed through the SANDAG Office of Diversity and Equity, and focuses on workforce utilization and development of programs addressing opportunities for low-income and systemically marginalized populations. Section 7.8 of the CBA outlines penalties for parties which fail to meet the Disadvantaged Workers and Targeted Workers goals in the form of liquidated damages in the amount of \$25 per Construction Craft Hour by which the project is short of either of the specified percentage goals.

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Workforce Development Program

The Workforce Opportunities for Rising Careers (WORC) program was created to advance targeted workforce equity in tandem with the Community Benefits Agreement. WORC is comprised of five programs: Pre-Apprenticeship Program; Disadvantaged Workers Program; Targeted Workers Program; Disadvantaged Businesses Program; and Helmets to Hardhats Program. Collectively, the programs support disadvantaged and low-income workers in the area to find quality, long-term career in the construction sector.

The SANDAG Pre-Apprenticeship Program is executed as part of the organization's involvement in the region's Apprenticeship Readiness Collaboration. Program partners include the San Diego Workforce Partnership, San Diego College of Continuing Education Foundation, and the San Diego County Building & Construction Trades Council.

The Pre-Apprenticeship Program graduates a class of students every 12 weeks and is now in its sixth cohort. The program employs Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3), college and career readiness classes, and OSHA 10 and CPR/First Aid certifications. Critical to the success of the program is collaboration with community colleges and unions, and program participants benefit from a paid apprenticeship stipend to make the 9-hour-a-day training feasible for students. SANDAG views the Pre-Apprenticeship Program as the first building block of the WORC program and intends to expand the suite of opportunities available to ensure pathways to quality jobs in construction.

Accountability Metrics

The first five cohorts of the Pre-Apprenticeship Program graduated 84 individuals, of which 42% were Hispanic/Latino, 13% were African American, 18% were women, and 26% had previous criminal justice involvement. As part of its intake analysis, SANDAG also collected information on students perceived barriers to entry, chief among of which was the need for work tools and equipment, which are subsequently provided by the program. Of the graduates, 49% were placed into an apprenticeship program with another 6% completing further required Pre-apprenticeship training.

All contractors engaged in SANDAG projects are subject to the CBA and required to utilize a standardized "Workforce Dispatch Request Form" when requesting labor from union hiring halls. This form assists contractors to identify workers that meet the Disadvantaged and Targeted Workers hiring goals. Contractors must hire a third-party "Jobs Coordinator" who is responsible for continued worker outreach, playing a vital role for long-term equity program recruitment efforts. SANDAG maintains a list of pre-qualified firms to act as Jobs Coordinators. In the event that a project does not meet hiring goals outlined in the CBA, the Jobs Coordinator may also be at risk of losing their pre-qualification status that is evaluated on every project.

Tip from the Team

Framing your program with regional context in mind can enable long-term success. The Office of Diversity and Equity created the CBA that will benefit the San Diego region by advancing racial equity, assisting vulnerable individuals, and supporting underserved local communities. The ultimate goal is to create economic sustainability benefits to the region, derived from employment and training programs to help individuals that are systemically marginalized.

San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development | CityBuild

San Francisco, California

Background

Founded in 2006, CityBuild is a construction training program within the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development that provides comprehensive pre-apprenticeship and construction administration training to residents. Embodying “partnership in action,” CityBuild partners with community-based organizations, trade unions and apprenticeship programs, construction contractors, government agencies, and city colleges to help residents secure high-quality jobs in the construction trades.

CityBuild participants have direct access to the unions and upon completion of their training are given priority referral to local jobs. Utilizing the first-source method, CityBuild notifies their participants of all opportunities, helps individuals schedule interviews, and ensures program graduates are given serious consideration for these roles.

Program Overview

Transportation Construction Policies

CityBuild fulfills its commitment to ensuring San Francisco residents find quality jobs through its partnership with building trade unions and a local hiring policy. Passed in 2010, the San Francisco Local Hiring Policy for Construction is considered one of the strongest pieces of legislation that promotes local hire in the country. The policy mandates that public construction projects over \$706,000 and private construction on public land have 30% of total work hours and 50% of apprentice hours filled by local residents. Though not mandated, the local hiring policy also establishes the goal of 15% of the local hires being from disadvantaged or low-income backgrounds.

In addition to the local hiring policy, a Citywide Project Labor Agreement came into effect in July 2020, which further supports CityBuild’s efforts to create high-quality, good-paying construction jobs.

Workforce Development Program

CityBuild is the coordinator of citywide construction training and development programs and creates opportunities for San Francisco residents who are 18 years of age or over, have a high school diploma or GED, pass a drug screening, and have a valid driver’s license to progress in their career. The CityBuild Academy is built on a 12-week multi-craft core curriculum that is provided by the North American Building Trades Union (NABTU). Participants receive hands-on construction skills, classroom

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education, and physical education as well as have the opportunity to complete skills assessments and safety awareness certifications.

CityBuild officials are keenly aware that the opportunity cost of training can be prohibitive to many residents. In response to this reality, CityBuild provides participants with a guaranteed stipend of \$1,000 a month as well as free tools require to start their construction careers. Participants can also utilize a social services referral program and may be able to have union initiation fees covered by CityBuild upon completion of the program. CityBuild is also in the process of developing an additional financial literacy module and life skills programming, recognizing that securing a quality job is the first step in a securing financial freedom.

In response to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the city's focus on women and family as a primary recovery area, CityBuild established an all-women's academy in the fall of 2021. The first cohort recruited 17 women, 16 of which graduated and 15 of which went into apprenticeships. A first-of-its-kind initiative, the all-women's academy provided the full suite of support services offered to other CityBuild participants in addition to reimbursements for childcare.

Accountability Metrics

In its first 15 years, CityBuild has helped 1,500 local residents successfully enter and build rewarding careers in the construction trades. Local residents, as defined by the local hiring policy, are individuals who have a permanent residence within the City and County of San Francisco for at least seven days before beginning work. While CityBuild uses geography as a primary eligibility qualification, the program utilizes various recruitment strategies to engage underrepresented populations and drive racial equity. These strategies include but are not limited to community navigators, social media accounts, paid advertisements, commercials, and word-of-mouth.

Demographic information of local residents is self-reported upon enrollment and therefore provides the necessary data for CityBuild to track and monitor their progress in reaching the targeted communities. Key underserved populations include but are not limited to people of color, justice-involved individuals, immigrants, first-generation Americans, women, individuals experiencing homelessness, single parents, and those considered low-income by federal guidelines.

A unique accountability feature of CityBuild is that they are able to impose financial penalties on contractors who are not in compliance with the local hire policy. Utilizing data in the certified payroll reports, CityBuild compliance officers monitor contract progression and, if necessary, impose financial penalties on or provide off-ramps for contractors who fail to meet requirements. The certified payroll report utilizes zip codes, rather than other economic factors, to assess if the mandated goals are being met.

Tip from the Team

Changing hearts and minds takes time, but incremental changes pay off in the long run. Strong local hire programs often originate as good-faith efforts within a community. The CityBuild program has evolved and expanded steadily over time, first implementing goals that were connected to credits such that contractors were financially motivated to meet local hire requirements. This established

wide-reaching contractor buy-in, making San Francisco's subsequent local hire policy and PLA a natural progression in the pursuit of local job creation. Programs do not happen overnight but are instead sustained by thoughtful leaders committed to pursuing economic and racial equity.