

**Statement of Capabilities**

**January 2017**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE**

**AFL-CIO WORKING FOR AMERICA INSTITUTE**

The AFL-CIO Working for America Institute (WAI) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) national workforce intermediary that assists unions, employers, skill training partnerships, the workforce system, and community organizations by providing employment and training related services that help to create, expand and retain high quality jobs. Since its formation in 1968 (as the Human Resources Development Institute – HRDI), the WAI has worked with AFL-CIO institutions (more than 600 state labor federations and local labor councils) and unions, employers, and workforce boards to increase the effectiveness of state and federal workforce systems. The Institute emphasizes:

* increasing the availability of worker-centered employment and training services,
* giving workers equitable access to job-driven upskilling opportunities,
* sustaining the national network of joint labor-management training partnerships, and
* advocating work-based learning and industry sector strategies.

The WAI is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of:

* Richard Trumka, Board Chair and President, AFL-CIO
* Elizabeth Shuler, Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO
* Tefere Gebre, Executive Vice-President, AFL-CIO

**CAPABILITIES**

***National Workforce Intermediary***

Over many years the WAI has participated in and developed expertise in managing publicly-funded programs aimed at developing the skills of workers employed in multiple industries. The Institute has been engaged as an intermediary, assisting businesses and unions in several high growth sectors by providing technical assistance and support for hiring and training workers. Developing and expanding access to training through registered apprenticeship has been central to this work.

***Sector Strategies and Labor-Management Partnerships***

The Institute has the demonstrated capacity as an intermediary to provide technical assistance and guidance to **unions, employers, and varied organizations nationwide in a number of industries**. In the 1980s, for example, the Institute provided technical assistance to unions and labor-management bodies, serving jobless oil and gas workers in Texas, auto workers in Wisconsin, steelworkers in Texas and Ohio, and workers displaced from various industries in Louisiana, Mississippi, and New Mexico. The Institute helped unions and joint committees to develop 150 programs, funded at $39 million, serving nearly 50,000 workers.

Through a series of partnership and capacity-building grants from the U.S. Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and foundations, the WAI provided technical assistance to state and local labor federations and to unions to help them understand their role in building a public workforce development system that supports high-road employers. The Institute developed a suite of technical assistance tools, including a High Road Community Audit, model Self-Sufficiency Standards for workforce boards, and a primer on the competencies required for labor representatives on those boards. The Institute delivered training on using these tools to intermediaries in New York, California, Texas and Illinois. Further capacity in these areas is highlighted in the references described below.

 Recently the Institute provided guidance on labor participation in the U.S. Department of Labor’s (USDOL) *ApprenticeshipUSA* State Apprenticeship Expansion grants to the seven state federations and labor workforce intermediaries involved in the Next Generation IMT grant (described below).

The WAI has a long history of reaching out to employers, unions, labor-management partnerships and community stakeholders to share knowledge and experience in developing training programs, including Registered Apprenticeships. Through its High Road Partnership Initiative, the Institute convened sectoral meetings of unions and employers in hospitality, baking, manufacturing and entertainment. The initiative’s *High Road Partnerships Report* identified 35 factors to compare regional and sectoral partnerships. It includes 14 case studies of the best practices of partnerships in culinary, manufacturing, garment production, graphic arts, healthcare, hospitality, and construction industries.

In the process of working with industry to adopt, modify and expand apprenticeships, the WAI collaborates with other sectoral partners to serve employers, unions and workers in manufacturing and the hotel and hospitality industries, among other sectors. The Institute has developed many critical relationships with business enterprises. Just a few examples of these for the two sectors include the following:

* For manufacturing, relationships exist with Anderson Global; Baldinger Bakery; Ball Corp; Bermo; Bokers; Cedar Lake Engineering (non-union); Dayton Rogers; Dayton-Phoenix Group; Fauricia; Hayes Performance Products; Hoods Packaging; Kellogg’s; Kohler Company; KP Welding & Fabricating; Masterlock; Nexsolutions (non-union); Ocean Spray; Premier Pontoon (non-union); Pure Power/RMG; Saco Polymers; SPX Waukesha Electric; Stant Corporation; and Wausau Paper Corp. These relationships have been forged in cooperation with the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP), a longstanding labor-management partnership.
* In hospitality, drawing just from experience in Los Angeles and Boston, businesses with which our partners have key training relationships include: AEG at Staples Center, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Hyatt Regency Long Beach, Marriott Hotel at LA Live/ Ritz Carlton, Sheraton Downtown Los Angeles, Beverly Hilton Hotel and W Hotel Westwood, Hilton Boston Downtown/Faneuil Hall, Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, Aramark Fenway Park, Restaurant Associates at Harvard Business School, Boston Park Plaza Hotel & Towers, Ritz-Carlton Boston Common, Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel and Northeastern University Food Service. These relationships have been developed in cooperation with the Boston Education, Skill & Training (BEST) Hospitality Training organization and the LA Hospitality Training Academy.

***Policy and Research***

In 2006, in conjunction with the Business Relations Group of USDOL, the Institute convened the Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Strategies Forum. In addition to industrial unions, the more than 150 participants included executives from US Steel, Bell Helicopter, Hasbro Games, Northrop Grumman, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Lockheed Martin, Daimler-Chrysler, Visteon Systems, and the Milwaukee Brush Company. The Institute identified best practices in joint training ventures between the CWA/IUE and Visteon Systems; the auto parts supplier market; International Association of Machinists (IAM) District 751 and Boeing; the Teamsters and Sikorsky Aircraft in New England; and multiple unions and companies in Gulf Coast shipbuilding.

***Innovations in Apprenticeship***

**Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) Apprenticeship Program**

A recent success story is the Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) Apprenticeship for manufacturing production workers. Crafted with support from USDOL, the IMT is described below. Development of this apprenticeship reflects an outstanding example of the experience and knowledge required to take the skill demands of industry and shape a federally-recognized apprenticeship program.

Today’s advanced manufacturing environment calls for highly skilled workers. New costly production equipment and increased demands for quality and safety require all manufacturing workers to possess advanced manufacturing skills or be moving toward the attainment of such skills. With funding from USDOL and its Office of Apprenticeship (OA), the WAI is working with industrial unions, employers, the WRTP and Jobs for the Future (JFF), a national workforce intermediary, to implement an innovative apprenticeship for manufacturing workers – the Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) Apprenticeship program.

The IMT is based on the Manufacturing Skills Standards Certification (MSSC) - world-class standards set by industry and labor. The IMT was developed by WRTP in collaboration with a diverse group of manufacturing employers and unions that include machining, electrical and food processing. Employer representatives included John Deere, Pure Power Technologies, GE Medical Systems, HB Performance Systems, and Ocean Spray.

Representatives from key Industrial Unions included the United Auto Workers (UAW), International Association of Machinists (IAM), United Steel Workers (USW), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM), Sheet Metal Workers (SMWIA) as well as the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO. This ensured that employer, training and worker interests were aligned in the development of the IMT apprenticeship. Representatives from the workforce development system, career and technical education also assisted.

The IMT apprenticeship was formally recognized by USDOL in November 2014. Through an initial grant to the Institute, the IMT was piloted in Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. The WAI is a subrecipient in a second grant in which the IMT is being expanded to Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and the Chicago region of Illinois. The IMT includes 264 hours of related instruction and 2,736 hours of on-the-job learning leading to journey-level certification. The IMT apprenticeship works because it is designed and implemented through a joint labor-management structure. It provides career pathways to advanced manufacturing as well as stackable industry recognized credentials. Related instruction is competency-based and the design is flexible to respond to specific employers and industry sub-sector needs.

**Project References**

The following six project references highlight work successfully accomplished by WAI under three past and three current programs. For three of the projects, WAI was the direct recipient of these federal funds; under the others, WAI was approved as a sub-contractor to JFF. The projects reference specific roles for the Institute and highlight its experience and capacity in a wide range of areas. While no two projects are alike, each encompasses several of the elements which make up the strategy for expanding quality registered apprenticeship programs into multiple industries. WAI’s experience and capacity to carry-out apprenticeship expansion tasks are strongly supported by the work conducted and outcomes achieved in the referenced projects.

**Reference 1 – Multiple Industry Intermediary Contract**

*Project Name:* WAI Multiple Industry Intermediary (MII) Project, a contract from the U.S. Department of Labor.

*Contracted Amount and Period of Performance*: $1,372,870 – September 21, 2016 to September 21, 2017. Base year contract with possible four year-long option periods.

*Tasks Accomplished*

Under this contract from the U.S. Department of Labor, the WAI is collaborating with industry sector partnerships to expand registered apprenticeship programs in advanced manufacturing and the hotel and hospitality industries. This project is national in scope. It builds upon the relationships that the WAI and sector partnerships have established with unions, employers, workforce intermediaries, and the federal workforce development system. To implement the program, the Institute has created a regionally distributed, network organization that includes subject matter experts in both sectors and staff who are skilled in program management, sales and marketing of registered apprenticeship, the preparation and registration of apprenticeship standards, program analysis, web development, community building through online communication, and program administration. Hourly staff and independent contractors and consultants are located in Washington, DC, Boston, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and California. A WAI project director and project manager administer the program at its DC headquarters. The WAI is recognized by USDOL as an Apprenticeship LEADER and is supporting the agency’s Sectors of Excellence in Apprenticeship Initiative.

WAI staff teams are providing technical assistance and support to employers, unions, educational institutions and workforce development boards to ensure that the Department meets its important goals in the enrollment of at least 400 new registered apprentices nationally, the establishments of two new nationally recognized apprenticeship programs, the adoption of at least 10 local apprenticeship program by employers, and assistance to employer apprenticeship sponsors in attaining greater diversity in apprenticeship. Through linkages with community and technical colleges, the WAI MII Project helps to provide college credit opportunities as well as industry-recognized credentials to apprentices.

Over the years the WAI has been involved in providing advice and technical assistance to a robust network of labor-engaged workforce intermediary organizations in many industries, including automobile and aircraft manufacturing, transportation, health care, public services, communications, retail, and others. The Institute has held several conferences to foster networking and knowledge sharing among the intermediaries. To plan and implement the MII Project, the Institute has mobilized the practical experiences of a national organization in manufacturing and three intermediaries in establishing apprenticeship and skill training programs.

In the manufacturing sector, the Institute leverages the national reach and union-employer relationships of the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Council (IUC), which brings together manufacturing unions to develop strategies, promote training, and advocate public policies to revitalize U.S. manufacturing. The IUC takes a leadership role on issues related to the global economy, clean energy and development of green jobs. Member unions include: [Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTGM)](http://www.bctgm.org/); [International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (IBB)](http://www.boilermakers.org/); [International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)](http://www.ibew.org/); [Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers (GMP)](http://www.gmpiu.org/); [IUE-CWA](http://www.iue-cwa.org/); [International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)](http://www.ifpte.org/); [International Association of Machinists (IAM)](http://www.goiam.org/); [United Mine Workers (UMWA)](http://www.umwa.org/); the [Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers](https://smart-union.org/) (SMART); [United Auto Workers (UAW](http://www.uaw.org/)); [United Steelworkers (USW)](http://www.usw.org/); and the [United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)](http://www.ufcw.org/). IUC unions have collective bargaining agreements with thousands of employers across the United States and Canada. WAI has demonstrated experience working with the IUC on the IMT apprenticeship program funded by USDOL and supported by workforce intermediaries in Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and in the Chicago area. The Institute is reaching out to unions in the IUC to connect with their nationwide network of industrial employers and market registered apprenticeship.

In manufacturing, outreach to unions and employers is led by the Keystone Development Partnership … [Add material]

Sectoral partnerships representing the hospitality industry have worked on numerous occasions to craft training solutions for both new hires and incumbent workers in need of upskill training. Such training includes apprenticeships registered with both the OA and state apprenticeship agencies. One such partnership engaged in the MII Project is **Boston Education, Skills & Training (BEST) Hospitality Training,** a 501 (c)(3) non-profit workforce development program to advance the well-paid sector of the hospitality industry. BEST conducts training that combines pre-employment and incumbent worker training designed to meet the labor needs of its hotel partners. Classes include English for Hospitality, computers, and citizenship, as well as certification skills training in On-Call Banquet Server, Busser/Server, Basic Culinary Skills, Food Safety, CPR, and more. Career coaches help under- and unemployed participants get quality jobs in partner hotels, such as those that are part of national chains including, Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, Intercontinental, Loews, Omni and Starwood. Under an American Apprenticeship grant received by the City of Boston, BEST Corp. has worked to refine the housekeeping apprenticeship program by developing a pre-apprenticeship program to help individuals move into actual apprenticeship slots in hotels and to succeed in training. In addition, BEST negotiated with the Commonwealth to reduce the 2,000 hours of OJT required for the apprenticeship to 50% for individuals with experience, creating a “hybrid” time and competency model, which is useful for a range of apprenticeships across sectors.

The other labor-management partnership engaged in the MII Project is the Los Angeles-based **Hospitality Training Academy** (HTA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit institution and a labor-management Taft-Hartley trust that provides benefits to union members working at more than 135 employers. Employees served by HTA are diverse, comprising workers from many immigrant communities. The members are predominantly women and people of color, and hail from all corners of the world. Union members work for employers across the hospitality spectrum, including hotels, airport concession companies, large event/sports venues, private universities, theme parks, restaurants, food service companies, corporate cafeterias, convention centers and casinos. HTA partners with educational institutions and community organizations to provide formal training to facilitate entry and advancement along extensive career paths within the hospitality and food service industries. HTA has worked with employers and MII Project subject matter experts to develop a wholly new apprenticeship program for line cooks, grill cooks and others who work as a team in hotel kitchens and restaurants.

During the first full quarter of the contract in late 2016, the MII Project nationally developed its annual work plan; devised its approach to distributing what the US Department of Labor has termed Employer Incentives; established a range of policies, procedures and systems to administer the contract and achieve deliverables; and reached out to other National Partner contract holders and educational institutions to plan joint activities such as an Apprenticeship Accelerator session. The Institute held an all-staff training session on these systems and participated in several Department training sessions on registered apprenticeship. Most importantly, staff and intermediaries reached out to 84 specific employers in the two sectors, reporting their progress in the Salesforce customer relations management software.

**Reference 2 – H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant**

*Project Name*: H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant: Apprenticeship Credentials for Manufacturing Careers.

*Contracted Amount and Period of Performance*: $ 3,381,000 – April 1, 2012 to April 1, 2017.

*Tasks Accomplished*

Under this grant the Institute is working with industrial unions, the WRTP, a longstanding labor-management partnership, and JFF, to pilot the new, innovative apprenticeship program for Industrial Manufacturing Technicians (IMT), described above. The IMT registered apprenticeship developed under this grant is being implemented in three states – Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. The IMT is effective because it is designed and implemented through a joint labor-management structure. It provides career pathways to advanced manufacturing and stackable industry recognized credentials. The design is flexible and includes options for competency based instruction to respond to employer needs.

As of March 2016 there were 192 active IMT apprentices, exceeding the goal of 160 apprentices. Over $3 million in employer match has been generated, also exceeding the grant goal. IMT apprentices average $21.00 per hour. IMT apprentices are diverse - 20% are female and 25% are people of color. In comparison, Wisconsin apprentices in all industrial trades were 2% female and 6% people of color. [Update figures with WRTP information.]

**Reference 3 – American Apprenticeship Initiative Grant –**

**WAI Sub-Agreement with Jobs for the Future**

In September 2015, Jobs for the Future was awarded a $5 million grant for the Next Generation Industrial Manufacturing Technician (Next Gen) Apprenticeship program to advance worker skills in advanced manufacturing. The NGIMT grant was developed by a partnership including the Leadership Team – JFF, WAI, and WRTP – and four labor workforce intermediary organizations. Funds are being used to enhance and expand the IMT apprenticeship developed and piloted by WAI through a U.S. Department of Labor Technical Skills and Training grant awarded in 2012 (see Reference #2). Next Gen will serve 1,450 individuals in eight participating states, implementing a competency-based hybrid manufacturing apprenticeship, focused on both entry-level and incumbent workers.

*Project Name*: Next Gen IMT Apprenticeship Project.

*Contracted Amount and Period of Performance*: $ 300,000– October 1, 2015, to September 30, 2020.

*Tasks Accomplished*

The Next Gen IMT Apprenticeship is designed to enhance and expand apprenticeship in the industrial sector. The Next Gen IMT is working to scale and replicate the H1-B project in eight states to increase the pipeline of highly qualified and diverse individuals prepared to enter middle- and high-skilled occupations within the growing manufacturing sector. The 3,000-hour IMT apprenticeship addresses the skills and training gap for entry-level production workers and prepares them for career advancement and advanced standing in higher skilled positions. To bring to scale this much-needed approach to apprenticeship in manufacturing, WAI, as a member of the Leadership Team and working with its partners, is implementing innovative strategies. Many of the tasks in Next Gen are aligned with those in the MII Project (Reference #1.) The aligned tasks for the Next Gen IMT Apprenticeship Project include:

(a) Conducting sector-based outreach - Working with state and local labor workforce intermediaries, WAI is promoting apprenticeship to employers, industrial unions and joint sector partnerships. WAI, its partner intermediaries, unions and their employers have participated and will continue to participate in USDOL Sectors of Excellence meetings on manufacturing. WAI will help market the IMT apprenticeship meetings hosted with state and local WDBs and apprenticeship agencies to identify companies seeking training as well as presentations to industry associations, manufacturing extension programs, and state, regional and national meetings of the industrial unions, including meetings with the IUC.

(b) Identifying employer and industry needs - Working with state and local labor workforce intermediary partners and industrial union affiliates, WAI is helping to identify and serve the needs of a wide range of employers and unions, especially small- to medium-sized firms, to ensure that the IMT apprenticeship delivers skills and competencies required across multiple businesses.

(c) Identifying employer and industry needs, establishing clearinghouses - WAI is assisting project intermediaries to promote apprenticeship using three primary approaches: creating regional apprenticeship clearinghouses for industry and the public workforce system; training intermediaries to conduct Industry Needs Assessments; and coordinating with regional economic development agencies and manufacturing communities.

(d) Promoting inclusion and diversity – WAI supports the work of the Indiana-based Labor Institute for Training (LIFT) on the translation of IMT curricula and related instruction into Spanish, which will provide access to IMT apprenticeship for workers who are limited in English-speaking skills. WAI is working with intermediaries, industrial unions and employers to promote advance standing as well as articulation with college level credit for apprentices.

(e) Providing technical assistance to employers and unions - WAI is working with intermediaries, industrial unions and the IUC and their signatory employers to assist them in becoming apprenticeship sponsors. WAI is helping to identify best practices to recruit and select incumbent workers to enroll in the IMT apprenticeship and develop ways to customize training to their specific needs, including on-the-job and related instruction. WAI is working with partner intermediaries and the IUC to share curricula, materials and instructional best practices.

**Reference 4 – Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)**

**Technical Assistance and Outreach Partnership Grant**

WAI received grant funding from USDOL to develop and implement a program to educate businesses, union-sponsored workforce development program operators and local union leaders about the benefits available to workers adversely impacted by trade agreements. A central objective of the project was to instruct affected entities and individuals on how to work through the steps necessary to ensure they qualify for TAA benefits and how they might encourage use of those benefits in ways that maximize the long-term economic security of impacted workers and their communities.

*Project Name*: Trade Adjustment Assistance Technical Assistance and Outreach Partnership Grant

*Contracted Amount and Period of Performance*: $819,194 – July 1, 2010 to December 31, 2011.

*Tasks Accomplished*

Under this technical assistance and outreach project, the Institute was responsible for: 1) ensuring that eligible petitioners were equipped to submit TAA petitions, 2) improving service delivery of Rapid Response at the state and local levels, 3) identifying challenges to workers with regard to taking full advantage of TAA benefits, and 4) fostering partnerships between States and service providers to improve strategies.

 To meet the requirements of the grant, WAI entered into strategic partnerships with state-based, union-sponsored workforce development and dislocated worker programs to ensure that the effects of the project were far-reaching and to maximize the overall effectiveness and efficient use of scarce grant resources. These partners, which leveraged key labor capacity and gave the project a national footprint, included: California Labor Federation Workforce and Economic Development Program; Indiana-based LIFT; Massachusetts AFL-CIO; Michigan Human Resources Development Institute; Minnesota AFL-CIO; New York State Workforce Development Institute; Pennsylvania AFL-CIO; and Ohio Dislocated Worker Program/United Labor Agency. WAI’s other strategic partner was the National Employment Law Project (NELP), whose nationally recognized team of lawyers, policy experts and researchers provided insights and analysis on TAA rules and systems. Additionally, WAI organized state forums to educate stakeholders about TAA and provided technical assistance to unions, employers and union-sponsored workforce development programs.

 Informational materials were developed. WAI provided assistance to unions and employers in filing TAA petitions and partnered with federal, state and local agencies to identify challenges facing unions and their members in accessing benefits. The Institute worked with labor representatives on state and local workforce boards to ensure the distribution of materials on TAA to a broad audience of potentially eligible individuals. The Institute also identified promising practices to encourage more effective utilization of TAA services. Under the TAA project, WAI completed the following tasks: (a) Project management and on-going communications with ETA and sub-recipients; (b) Focused on an ETA Sectors of Excellence (SEA) target industry, manufacturing, and leveraged the expertise of a subject matter experts in this sector to provide information about education and training offerings to trade impacted workers; (c) Provided ongoing technical assistance to companies, organized labor, workers and workforce system partners; (d) Hosted employer meetings; (e) Identified, organized and developed resources; (f) Identified promising practices; and (g) Provided direct assistance to employers and labor organizations.

**Reference 5 – Firm Fixed Price Purchase Order for WIB Handbook**:

 Under this purchase order from USDOL ETA, WAI published “*Sharing Success: Common Policies and Practices of Urban WIBs Reporting High Client Earnings,”* a handbook to communicate research and document successful practices used by Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-funded boards to achieve high earnings by workers participating in their programs.

*Project Name and Report*: Workforce Investment Board Handbook. Firm Fixed Price Purchase Order

(<http://www.aflcio.org/content/download/11411/142921/Sharing_Success_Final.pdf>)

*Contracted Amount and Period of Performance*: $88,000 – May 18, 2010 to September 18, 2010.

*Tasks Accomplished*

Under this project, WAI researched and documented WIBs that have made a commitment to working with unionized firms and joint training programs, as well as Regis­tered Apprenticeship programs, to support high wage, high quality training and job placement programs. WAI’s team investigated and examined the various ways in which boards have organized their policies and programmatic work to accomplish these goals. As a result of its research and analysis, WAI published an easy-to-understand document that distills the lessons from these case studies into an actionable how-to guide for WIB members and staff that provides concrete examples of replicable and promising practices to prepare participants for family-sustaining jobs. This project accomplished a number of tasks, including, but not limited to: (a) Effective project management and regular communication with ETA; (b) Outreach to local workforce boards; and data indicated high performance results; (c) Documentation of apprenticeship models and approaches used by high performing local boards and identification of joint labor management apprenticeship programs as a lead contributing factor in achieving high client earnings for WIA clients.

**Reference 6 – Pathways of Out of Poverty Grant , WAI Sub-Agreement with JFF**

The Green Pathways Out of Poverty Initiative developed career pathways into family-sustaining jobs in green industries for unemployed and disadvantaged individuals residing in five cities impacted by the economic downturn: Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Milwaukee and Philadelphia.

*Project Name*: USDOL Recovery Act Green Pathways Out of Poverty Grant Program

*Contracted Amount and Period of Performance*: $746,337 – May 1, 2010 to September 31, 2012.

*Tasks Accomplished*

Under the Pathways project, WAI served as a partner with and sub-recipient to JFF to carry out the goals of the grant. This project concentrated on developing sustainable green jobs partnerships among employers, organized labor, and workforce development practitioners, with the central goal of connecting hard-to-serve targeted populations to career advancement pathways. WAI collaborated with JFF in project oversight and was chiefly responsible for providing technical assistance to five local affiliates. The Institute's unique expertise and relationships with organized labor enabled WAI to play a critical role in the success of the local initiatives, allowing each to build on successful pre-apprenticeship models and other training resources of the AFL-CIO. Through an integrated set of tools and strategies that included coaching and learning community activities, JFF, the Institute and a third national partner, Wider Opportunities for Women, sought to deepen connections to and between the public workforce system and organized labor. As part of its work on this grant, WAI entered into a sub-agreement with the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, (now North America’s Building Trades Unions – NABTU). The Building Trades provided instruction for coordinators of the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) in order to train coordinators from each of the five cities to deliver the MC3. The Building Trades facilitated joint labor-management apprenticeship committee involvement and active participation in the MC3 program.

 In connection with the Green Pathways Out of Poverty project, WAI performed a variety of tasks. These included: (a) Outreach to and facilitation of communication and collaboration among business, labor, trainers and workforce system partners; (b) Shared career advancement models, including those linked to apprenticeships, with project partners; (c) Provided technical assistance to employers, labor representatives and those operating training programs; (d) Assisted local partners in accessing and developing curricula to help them prepare job seekers for successful admission to either a registered joint apprenticeship program or to other union-sponsored training programs; and (e) Reviewed and analyzed local apprenticeship curricula for links to academic credit.

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In summary,WAI harnesses the vast experience and resources of America’s labor movement, built upon centuries’ old traditions such as apprenticeship, where skill development and production of quality work products by skilled workers are the hallmark. Organized labor represents millions of American workers employed in thousands of businesses. The span of this presence reaches across the 50 states and US territories – into virtually every major sector of the economy. While, by definition, the labor movement represents workers, it lives inside the very businesses that fuel the nation’s prosperity. Across the country, labor-management groups are devising strategies to ensure that American companies remain competitive globally. As evidenced by the IMT apprenticeship, the ingenuity of business and labor working together produces strategies that ensure the workforce has the skills necessary to meet the demands of business, while at the same time providing opportunities for workers to earn family-sustaining wages and move to increasingly well paid positions.