



Roads To Your Future - Fall 2021 e-Newsletter

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Using the Strategic Workforce Development Toolkit

Looking for Highway Construction Workforce Partnership (HCWP) resources to fill highway construction jobs in your region? Check out the updated [HCWP Strategic Workforce Development \(SWD\) Toolkit](#). It provides convenient access to useful materials for identifying, training, and placing interested individuals into transportation careers. It can help you find best practices and success stories from those who have managed successful HCWPs.

The HCWP/SWD Toolkit is free for individuals from the construction industry, government entities, and other partner organizations interested in learning how to establish an HCWP. Access materials to help you get started today.



Targeting Recruitment Efforts to Fill Workforce Gaps

Keeping a consistent flow of applicants for highway construction positions is crucial to maintaining a strong workforce that will keep the nation's transportation industry and economy thriving. In locations like Idaho, Los Angeles, and Pittsburgh, HCWP working groups are refining recruitment strategies to fill industry workforce gaps.

Because it is important to have more applications than the number of available positions, outreach plays a major part in recruitment efforts. Partnering with regional job centers and employing outreach channels that range from social media to word-of-mouth advertising can help make sure you reach a robust number of potential applicants.

In Pittsburgh, recruitment teams created an innovative game application to allow interested individuals to explore highway construction sites to see what daily work might be like. "Our message was 'Play the game. Get the work,'" said Jason Koss, Director of Industry Relations for the Pittsburgh Job Corps Center. "The app became a focal point of our recruitment efforts. When we got people to play, we got people to apply."

Idaho spread the word about training opportunities for heavy equipment operators through social media and news outlets. In Los Angeles, the South Bay Workforce Board collaborated to recruit potential applicants to information sessions as a first step toward training and placement into highway construction careers.

To find ways you can enhance your outreach and recruitment efforts to fill highway construction workforce shortages, click [here](#).

Developing Successful Workforce Training Programs

Building a capable highway construction workforce starts with a solid foundation. The Arizona, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and Rhode Island HCWPs are helping to train qualified individuals to excel in highway construction apprenticeship programs that launch lasting careers.

The National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), a nationally recognized training program provider, developed a heavy highway construction curriculum that the Pittsburgh Job Corps Center uses as the basis for their highway construction training program. Supported by the U.S. Department of Labor, Job Corps provides training and job-placement services for individuals, ages 16–24, across the nation. Helping applicants understand the rigors of the work while offering support services to eliminate employment barriers like lack of education and financial instability are key to advancing students through the programs.

The Arizona HCWP has developed a week-long “Industry Readiness” highway construction orientation program. Successful graduates are hired by contractors to continue to develop their skills to be valued employees. “We put a lot of energy into training people who want to commit to the work,” said Corey Foster, a workforce development specialist for the Arizona Chapter, Associated General Contractors. “We’re meeting the expectations of our applicants, contractors, and job centers. There’s so much care that goes into it.”

The Rhode Island HCWP utilizes the Rhode Island “Building Futures” program, a key partner of the Rhode Island Workforce Development Board. The program focuses on helping women get the training and skills needed for success in the highway construction industry.

To learn more and find out how you can implement successful highway construction training programs to address workforce shortages in your region, click [here](#).

Providing Support for Tomorrow’s Workforce

The Denver, Los Angeles, and Rhode Island HCWPs offer support programs that provide everything from housing and rental assistance to protective clothing, tools, and transportation to and from training and job sites.

Case managers meet with applicants to identify their career interests and guide them to the training and other services that are right for them. They also work with employers and other organizations, including veterans' programs, and small businesses, for additional support and job placement.

Alena Jimenez, Navigator and Business Services Coordinator for the Center for Workforce Initiatives in Denver, said that stabilizing an individual at the start of the program is important for long-term retention. "Once a person's home life is stable enough for them to get to the job, we can work on career development," said Jimenez. "We start with a basic list of stabilizing resources. As we get to know an individual, we're able to cover other needs they have."

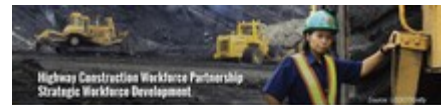
To find out how you can provide support for qualified individuals interested in starting careers in the highway construction industry, click [here](#) or contact HCWP Program Manager [Clark Martin](#).

Recent News

HCWP Case Studies

Build your workforce with the training tools that have been successful in construction programs across the country. By bringing together highway construction, education, and workforce interests at State and local levels, partner working groups form to identify needs and resources to fill industry workforce gaps. Five case studies were recently added to the [HCWP/SWD Toolkit](#) and include a two-page summary on the respective topic with contact information.

Building Tomorrow's Highway Construction Workforce: An Introduction



Placing Tomorrow's Highway Construction Workforce

Alabama, Arizona, Denver

When it comes to placing qualified individuals into the highway construction positions that support the nation's transportation industry and drive the economy forward, the Highway Construction Workforce Partnership (HCWP) established by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) offers a winning pathway. HCWPs in Alabama, Arizona, and Denver have tailored programs that offer the training, support, and placement to sustain a lasting workforce.

Preparing Workers for Needed Roles

Highway construction workforce needs vary across the nation's rural and urban areas. Most job sites require workers to possess a basic skill set, but some positions require individuals to master crafts like grading, concrete, applying asphalt, or operating heavy equipment. To build operational roles in Arizona, the HCWP engages general superintendents and foremen quarterly to identify workforce needs. In addition, they track training program participants to understand where their professional interests and skills align.

"We try to be flexible so individuals can determine what works best for their career," said Corey Stone, Workforce Development Specialist for the Arizona Chapter of Associated General Contractors of America. "With 15 different credits available, I can't emphasize enough how important it is to find the one you want to perfect."

"We want the people in our program to be the next generation, so we try to find the most suitable option for everyone."

COREY STONE
ALABAMA HCWP

Engaging With Industry Representatives

The Alabama HCWP reduces its placement success rate by maintaining a close working relationship with hiring contractors. David Feltus, Dean of Workforce Economic Development at Wallace State Community College in Alabama, and employers complete commitment forms at the beginning of each training class to indicate how many individuals they intend to hire.

"Our program is designed so participants get hired," said Feltus. "Employers sign an agreement confirming their participation in the program, ensuring they'll consider a certain number of graduates for full-time employment, and indicating how much they'll pay the individuals they hire."

To ensure the program continues to produce viable candidates, the Alabama HCWP regularly considers input from its industry representatives. "We are making improvements to our internal processes continuously," said Feltus. "We've developed score cards for employers to fill out to identify any issues regarding performance, so we can address them when they occur."

www.hcwp.com/resources

If you haven't seen our video sharing a brief overview of how the HCWP identifies, trains, and places workers in the highway construction trades, you can watch it [here](#).

Be sure to click the "Sign Up" button below to receive the most up-to-date information on the Highway Construction Workforce Partnership (HCWP) and future programs.

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