



Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP/BIG STEP)
Quarterly Narrative Report (Q6): November 1, 2013 to January 31, 2014
WRTP/BIG STEP-Milwaukee County Ready to Work Partnership

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

The **WRTP/BIG STEP** is an innovative and nationally recognized workforce development intermediary. As a nonprofit agency, **WRTP/BIG STEP** has developed comprehensive strategies and programs to prepare and connect unemployed workers and underserved Milwaukee County residents with family supporting careers in the Manufacturing and Construction industries, as well as emerging sectors of the private and public economy. As an intermediary, **WRTP/BIGSTEP** is an integrated funding model leveraging public and private investments and partnerships in meeting the needs of the economy and connecting people with careers.

Working with industry to close the skills gap in workforce development, **WRTP/BIG STEP's Industry led, Worker Centered and Community Focused** approach substantially improves the economic strength of the entire Milwaukee community. As an industry led organization, **WRTP/BIG STEP** works with industry to develop training and employment programs to connect Milwaukee County residents with employment and training opportunities that enhance the competitive position and sustainability of the regional construction and manufacturing industries, as well as the public sector and emerging sectors of the economy. Labor market data and recent news highlight the need to develop a skilled and qualified workforce in a coordinated manner in order to ensure the economic and social viability and vitality of the Milwaukee region.

The Ready To Work initiative is a "high road" approach to put real people on real family supporting career pathways by facilitating recruitment, training, direct hire, placement and retention services for Milwaukee County Residents. Complimentary to traditional "jobs programs", **WRTP/BIG STEP** has developed a flexible and industry responsive model that identifies construction and manufacturing workforce needs first, and then develops strategies and programs to connect Milwaukee County residents with those jobs. This ensures that the training, career pathway programming, and employment support that we provide prepares individuals for placement in pre-targeted jobs upon successful completion of the programs. Our participants are placed in employment through industry designed and credentialed on the job training programs where they learn and earn as they begin their new career pathways.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Ready to Work program was launched in August of 2012 with the goal of connecting Milwaukee County residents to career pathways and employment. This narrative report covers Quarter Six (Q6), the final quarter of the partnership. The project is designed to engage industry and develop education and training programs and partnerships that lead to careers and meet the needs of public and private sector employers and emerging needs within Milwaukee County. The Narrative Report is complimentary to Data & Fiscal Reporting providing to Milwaukee County, and highlights work completed in the three areas of the project design – working with industry and Milwaukee County to identify employment opportunities, expanding and enhancing community workforce partnerships, and implementing effective workforce strategies to connect individuals with education, training, and employment.

Prepared on February 28, 2014 By:

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INDUSTRY & MILWAUKEE COUNTY PARTNERSHIP

Construction Program Highlights

Industry Field Work

WRTP/BIG STEP industry field work includes networking, organizing and building relationships with employers and labor partners to identify current and projected occupational openings, to discuss and analyze skills, experience, and employment requirements for occupations and classifications, to discuss and develop workforce strategies to meet growth and expansion needs as well as advancement and retention strategies for current workers, and looking at best practices throughout industry to enhance productivity and competitiveness.

As a result of some of our field work, industry staff has been working closely with several unions to collaborate and help identify industry needs and contractor demands, so that contractors are able to continue to successfully bid on projects knowing that they can meet workforce demands.

Also on December 2, we hosted a Milwaukee County Contractor's workshop. Contractors, labor representatives and developers from all over the region were invited to learn about the Milwaukee County contracting process, workforce requirements and the resources available to them to help them successfully work with the County.

We continue to coordinate the workforce development efforts of the Milwaukee Lakefront Redevelopment project. Deconstruction has begun and will accelerate throughout the spring.

We are working with Progressive Health Centers to design local workforce recruitment and training strategies around another very large building project in Milwaukee's Central City. A first community information session and recruitment event was held in January in Milwaukee.

WRTP/BIG STEP is also working closely with contractors and various JAC committees to ensure their current RPP and COIN eligible workers are getting certified in anticipation of several new local projects with workforce requirements and also reviewing applicant lists to make certain they have a diverse pipeline of workers prepared to work as new opportunities arise. Coordinating this need in advance with contractors and the JAC's helps to make certain that the local workforce is strong enough to support the anticipated increase in demand for workers. Another JAC committee meeting was held in the first week of December at our Center of Excellence.

As a result of this highly successful Milwaukee County Ready to Work Partnership, WRTP/BIG STEP workforce development intermediary role has been at the forefront of workforce development planning projects throughout the county and a leader in the coordination of efforts among a variety of entities including public, private, industry and community based interests. By coordinating the efforts of all the parties, we are able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the entire local construction workforce and make suggestions and recommendations that provide win-win solutions for the entire regional economy.

Orientations, Direct Hire and Recruitment Activities

Despite the challenges that winter weather in Wisconsin poses for the construction industry, November through January are busy within WRTP/BIG STEP's programs. WRTP/BIG STEP continues to hold General Information Sessions, Resource Information Sessions and BIG STEP Orientations and Manufacturing Direct Hire Orientations monthly.

WRTP/BIG STEP hosts Apprenticeship Awareness Information Days with several apprenticeship training directors at our Center of Excellence. The apprenticeship training directors are utilizing this time to discuss in detail their specific trade with prospective apprenticeship candidates. In November, the apprenticeship training directors from the Laborers and Painters unions held Apprenticeship Awareness Information Days to discuss the benefits of union membership, what an apprenticeship is, and what our candidates need to do to be ready for a career in construction. Due to the popularity of these sessions among the training directors and the attendees, more of these sessions with a variety of trades are being scheduled each month in the Center of Excellence with several scheduled throughout the spring of 2014.

On December 10th we assisted the Bricklayers by hosting and recruiting candidates for another successful Pre-Job training session to be held in 2014. Several of our current and previous Road Building Road Building participants were invited to attend.

In January 2014, we held an Apprenticeship Awareness Fair. All former construction trainees including the Road Building graduates for the last two years, were invited to attend the event held on January 17, 2014, in partnership with over 20 of Milwaukee's building and construction trades. This was a great opportunity for Milwaukee community residents to obtain information about apprenticeships from trade representatives, learn more about apprenticeship application processes, requirements, and types of work available in Milwaukee's construction sector among the tablers at the event were training directors from the Boilermakers, Bricklayers, Carpenters, Cement Masons, Electricians, Glaziers, Heat and Frost, Ironworkers, Laborers, Operating Engineers, Operating Engineers, Painters, Plasterers, Plumbers, Roofers, Sheet metal, Sprinkler fitters, Steamfitters, and Tile setters as well as contractors and associations. Over 130 residents recruited from former trainees and from the general community attended the event.

Training and Career Preparation Activities

WRTP/BIG STEP continues to increase the numbers of individuals in our tutoring program to prepare candidates for their trade of interest and help them qualify for the apprenticeship program. This increase in apprenticeship preparation is in direct response to the anticipated increase in need for new apprentices expressed by the trades as a result of the sharp expected increase in demand for construction workers due to several large projects about to begin in the greater Milwaukee area.

We are offering ongoing classes in OSHA 10 and OSHA 30 as well as Asbestos Awareness courses and trades specific classes (such as for the Bricklayers) to continue to do outreach to, follow up with and skills upgrades for incumbent workers in the trades. These activities continued throughout the quarter. WRTP/BIG STEP began an ELCS-Road Building class with 12 individuals on November 5, 2013 that ran through December 20th. As a hands on module in this class the class rebuilt a small walkway section for a local labor union partner in conjunction with several other labor partners.

In what became a cooperative multi-trades driven training project, IBEW's Bzdawka and Jante; WRTP/BIG STEP instructor, Travis Pease from the Ironworkers; Kilah Engelke, Training Coordinator for OPMCIA 599; Matt Gahns, the Business Agent with OPMCIA 599; and Josh Tyrell, with Job Corp and an OPMCIA 599 member were all on hand for a Saturday in November to complete the project. Kurt Jante Business Agent IBEW 494 said, "A collaborative effort to replace the section of sidewalk for Building Advantage came about as John Swan III,

Representative for Laborers International Local 113, suggested this could be used as a training class by WRTP/BIG STEP for hands on experience. Working closely with WRTP/BIG STEP staff, Josh, Kilah, Matt, and Travis as instructors and the trainee's effort, all came together with the removal of the old sidewalk, forming, pouring and finishing the new sidewalk just in time before the rains came."

Hands on training is among the most effective tools in the skilled trades and the cooperative efforts of so many players really gave the WRTP/BIG STEP road building class a great an opportunity to ask questions, get dirty, and learn first-hand about a day in the life of a road building tradesperson. Kilah Engelke, Training Director OPCMIA 599 explained the project, "I was meeting with WRTP/BIG STEP and invited to participate in a project that would facilitate a relationship between IBEW 494 and OPCMIA 599. We were invited to help by providing the skills while WRTP/BIG STEP would provide the trainees through the DOT Road Building class, and IBEW would provide the material and the project to complete. This project was a culmination of the skills of several trades and was a perfect example of how solidarity, not only WITHIN each trade, but also between the trades will be how we move successfully FORWARD and into the future. This project served as a great opportunity to bring some realistic jobsite experience to these students interested in pursuing careers in road building and the OPCMIA Local 599 is eager to continue to take advantage of opportunities like this that will help us develop our work force, and that will make our unions stronger!"

The successful completion of the class led into the trainees being invited to the Apprenticeship Awareness Fair and other WRTP/BIG STEP activities as they begin their job hunts on projects crews in a variety of trades such as the downtown, lakefront and zoo interchange projects.

We held a Hazmat Training for Laborer's Local 113 in December .With the December Road Building class completed, we began planning and recruiting for our first 2014 Road Building class. Dates, etc are being confirmed with instructors as well as the number of classes we will run in 2014.

In partnership with the City of Milwaukee, our first individual in the CDL class has completed the course and received his license in December. With a success under our hats, we are now recruiting more individuals into the CDL training opportunity.

In January, WRTP/BIG STEP partnered with the City of Milwaukee, Department of Public Works to begin 30 participants on January 31, 2014 in a Landscaping training class that will last for 16 weeks. In addition to being paid during the initial training period, the City has committed to hire the majority of the candidates who complete the program.

Manufacturing Program Highlights

Industry Field Work

WRTP/BIG STEP's field work has been targeted strategically to assist the industry with direct employment connection, pre-employment entry-level skills training, and utilization of the IMT Apprenticeship. Assessments are continuing with several employers to determine the viability, likelihood and potential number of employment openings, including the number of individuals who can be put into apprenticeships.

Throughout the process on-going discussions via email, phone and in person contacts and programs designed to succeed are building strong relationships between WRTP/BIG STEP, labor and management in these firms. In

addition to the above partnerships and training programs the following is a list of the companies we've worked with and are continuing to work with on workforce development issues:

- a. HB Performance Systems – They have been hiring throughout the fall from our pre-employment training workshops and have scheduled a more formal training for another 12 employees in January 2014.
- b. PM Plastics- A proposal for training and placement has been approved by PM Plastics and they are asking for resumes and test scores for potential candidates. We are still negotiating terms of the placements with labor and management.
- c. Harley Davidson- We have several individuals we have trained and who are ready to be hired for positions. We are also offering them choices to take other options as they become available.
- d. Wacker Neuson- We have received a contract for workforce development with Wacker and are in the process of verifying the numbers and job classifications.
- e. Advanced Technology International (ATI-Gunstock) – ATI has begun hiring through our programs. We are placing individuals through direct hire and out of our out training programs as they continue to design an IMT programs. They are also planning an incumbent worker training in MSSC modules for a large number of employees.
- f. Pure Power Technologies- We are continuing discussions with them.
- g. GE Energy – We are continuing to work with GE to fill direct hire opportunities and are in ongoing discussions with them around new training opportunities.
- h. Ocean Spray – We are working with Ocean Spray to design IMT apprenticeship training programs for over 100 employees in the next year. These discussions are continuing in earnest.
- i. We are also continuing discussions with Preferred Brush and Miller Brewing Company around workforce development opportunities.

Orientations, Direct Hire and Recruitment Activities

WRTP/BIG STEP staff implemented a number of strategies to outreach and recruit candidates for participation in employment and training programs. The primary strategy for recruitment is the General Information Session (GIS) which is coordinated monthly and is open to residents and individual participating in workforce programs through local community organizations and/or the One Stop Job Centers.

Our Resource Information Sessions (RIS) and General Information Sessions (GIS) were held monthly throughout the quarter. The RIS is designed to assist individuals with barriers to program enrollment and employment with referrals to assistance programs within our Community Workforce Partnership.

Manufacturing Direct Hire Sessions, BIG STEP Orientations and Manufacturing Direct Hire Orientations were also held monthly during this quarter.

Training and Career Preparation Activities

In December three classes were started. The classes consisted 26 individuals .The classes received an Entry Level Manufacturing Skills (ELMS 2) certification which included introductory courses in MSSC-GPM, healthy marriage, blueprint reading, math for manufacturing, industry awareness, essential skills, OSHA safety, job readiness, and metrology. Out of the 26 participants in these three classes, 24 completed them and were certified.

- December 2nd through January 10th TJ ELMS2 with 5 members (1 dropped) in partnership with YWCA transitional jobs program for four weeks. Four completed the program.
- December 9th through January 10th another 10 (1 dropped) individuals participated in a three week ELMS2 training. Nine completed this class.
- December 16th through January 17th another 11 individuals participated in a three week ELMS2 training. All participants completed this class.

Out of the 26 individuals in these courses 24 completed training and to date 11 of them have been placed (or have placements pending with start dates in the next few days).

COMMUNITY FOCUSED PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Youth Workforce Outreach and Coordination

The WRTP/BIG STEP Pathways to Prosperity Youth Project launched earlier this year. With the assistance of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Pathways was able to focus in on work with Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), helping to provide career exploration and activities to strengthen employability skills for students at the middle and high school levels.

Specifically working in locally strong industries with career opportunities for youth, WRTP/BIG STEP is recruiting and connecting industry and post-secondary partners; providing partnership training for educators and industry professionals; and, assisting with career exploration for young people through work-based learning (WBL). Work based learning includes job shadowing, industry participation in classrooms, internships, worksite tours, co-op education and youth apprenticeship. WRTP/BIG STEP brings the active involvement of industry and the credibility to convene all necessary partners to build the Pathways to Prosperity model. WRTP/BIG STEP is facilitating intense collaboration between youth, schools, industry and policymakers through the Pathways to Prosperity project.

Pipeline Development

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP (CWP)

WRTP/BIG STEP worked actively with the Community Workforce Partnership in Q6 to bring community based resources to our participants throughout our programming

We will continue the work reported in previous reports with emphasis being placed on the individual needs of our participants. Wrap around services provided by our community partners may include one on one career and job placement counseling, individual training plans and classes inclusive of such programs as Healthy Marriage, the Fatherhood Initiative and construction industry focused financial training courses. Through FSET we are offering candidates the opportunity to receive work tools, uniforms and boots as well as other services provided through the program.

All of our programs are designed to ensure that the individual is not only well trained to work from the first day on the job, but also that they are prepared for the demands of the industry. In an effort to ensure coordinated technical assistance to industry, WRTP/BIG STEP field staff meets regularly with WMEP staff to share information regarding segments of the sector with needs.

Agency Wide recognition

In January of 2014, the WRTP/BIG STEP programs, partnerships, trainees and employers became the focus of a trip to Milwaukee by the President of the United States, Barack Obama. Our employer driven training programs in partnership with GE Energy and partners throughout the community including our successful graduates in the early Milwaukee County Ready to Work trainings classes were the highlight of the events and showcased nationally as model workforce development programs to be replicated nationwide in and initiative the White House has titled **“Opportunity for All: Ready to Work”**.

In a report released by the White House in conjunction with the Presidential visit to Milwaukee, WRTP/BIG STEP’s unique approach is touted as among the best in the nation. In addition, Mr. Earl Buford, President and CEO of WRTP/BIG STEP was invited to sit in on a panel discussion hosted at the White House the next day by Vice President Joe Biden. Following the event, Mr. Biden announced an advisory team on workforce development on which, Mr. Buford has been invited to participate as well.

WRTP/BIG STEP and Milwaukee County have partnered under the Ready to Work initiative to create a program that is so successful the nation is taking notice.

CAREER PATHWAYS & PLACEMENT ACTIVITIES

The **WRTP/BIG STEP-Milwaukee County Ready to Work Partnership** is growing rapidly. Under the program we have doubled the number of General Information Sessions (GIS) and direct hire orientations, implemented Resource Information Sessions (RIS) sessions and related career pathway workshops, added valuable industry recognized certifications such as Multi-Core Craft Curriculum (MC3) and four of five MSSC modules to achieve the Certified Production Technician certification, and ramped up significant field work within our targeted employment sectors.

Services Completed	Q6	Q6	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1	Final Contract totals
Milwaukee County Residents - Recruitment & Assessment	558	389	396	337	340	492	2,512
Milwaukee County Residents - Career Pathway	123	165	142	102	106	217	855
Placed in Employment	89	103	162	74	31	44	503

The following is a list of some of the construction and manufacturing companies that hired WRTP/BIG STEP participants in Q6:

Aeroloc, Inc	Hetzel-Sanfilippo, Inc	Preferred Brush
Building Services, Inc.	Illingworth Kilgust Mechanical Inc.	Pieper Electric Inc.
Burkhart Construction	Integrity Environmental	PM Plastics
Butters-Fetting Company	JM Brennan	Uihlein Electric Co., Inc
C. W. Purpero	Kellmen Restoration	UPS
CG Schmidt	M.A. Mortenson	Veit
Day & Zimmerman	Marinette Marine Corp	W.J. Sheard

GE Energy	Masterson	Waste Management
Gordon Solutions	Midwest Drilled Foundations and Engineering Inc.	Wingra Stone
Harley Davidson	Musson Brothers	
HB Performance Systems	Payne and Dolan	

The successes of Milwaukee County Ready to Work as we finish of the project are due to **WRTP/BIG STEP**'s well developed and nationally recognized formula. The Milwaukee County Ready to Work partnership enables us continue to scale our programming to meet the industry demands forecasted in manufacturing and construction. **WRTP/BIG STEP** is proud to announce that it has exceeded the Milwaukee County Ready to Work Partnership's program goals to serve 1,000 new participants and place 500 Milwaukee County residents in family supporting careers by the end of January 31, 2014.