



**Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP/BIG STEP)
Quarterly Narrative Report: February 1, 2013 to April 1, 2013
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. A not for profit agency, **WRTP/BIG STEP** has developed comprehensive systems to align the needs of unemployed and underserved community residents seeking family supporting careers. 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.

By working with industries 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 in the local construction and manufacturing industries, 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.

WRTP/BIG STEP 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 we provide our participants prepares them 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 Three (Q3) 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

Prepared on March 26, 2013 By:

WRTP/BIG STEP, 3841 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53208, 414-342-9787, www.wrtp.org

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.

INDUSTRY & MILWAUKEE COUNTY PARTNERSHIP

Construction Program Highlights

In preparation for a busy summer and fall of construction in Milwaukee, we have continued a higher number of individuals in our construction training and tutoring programs. In conjunction with the skilled trades, MATC, and the WI Bureau of Apprenticeship, WRTP/BIG STEP provides industry based training and certification, career development and employment support for individuals seeking an apprenticeship or placement into the industry. WRTP/BIG STEP has a unique partnership with the trades and tutors Milwaukee County residents interested in a construction career pathway in basic math, reading, spatial and mechanical skills - all skills and aptitudes critical to score well and pass the Accuplacer assessment required for entry into the trades. We introduce them to basic construction industry curriculum including green building concepts, assist them in choosing a career pathway in a skilled trade, and administer the Accuplacer assessment in preparation for apprenticeship. Our program in Q3 continued with more individuals in tutoring than in prior years due to our work with industry to identify and assess an overall increase in opportunities in the construction industry.

As a part of this process, **WRTP/BIG STEP's** Construction program meets regularly with the Joint Apprenticeship Committees and the Construction Labor Management Council to assess the construction needs of the community at large and identify trends in construction employment in the next year. For example, in Q3, we have begun preparing for a training program with the Bricklayer's union. They host a pre-job apprenticeship program and are looking to develop a new partnership with WRTP/BIGSTEP to recruit qualified candidates for the program. . We also partnered with the Painter's Union to implement program and certification in lead paint abatement, Road Building Training classes planned with the Ironworkers and Cement Masons for the next quarter. **WRTP/BIG STEP** is working directly with Milwaukee County Parks to train all of their new hires in the Parks department's seasonal workforce as well as providing skills upgrade training for the Park's incumbent workforce such as skid steer and heavy equipment training.

WRTP/BIG STEP participants in the Road Building Training class in April 2013 have had the benefit of key trades playing a significant role in contributing to the class. OPMCIA 599 invited the class to their training center, and Kilah Engelke, Training Coordinator, gave the class a chance to see a day in the life of a Cement Mason, including hands on presentations. The class received valuable information about the work in the construction field and the benefits of enrolling in a union construction apprenticeship program. Scott Hink, Financial Secretary of OMCMA 599, and Matt Ganhs, Business Agent 588, spoke with the participants about the benefits of being part of the trades as well as working for a high-road contractors. Rick Hanson, Training Coordinator for the Ironworkers, presented to the road building class a description of work as an ironworker, how to apply for the apprenticeship, and how to be successful in this career. Adam Holmes, Training Coordinator for IUPATDC 7 and John Burcaw, International Representative, discussed how to pursue an apprenticeship as a painter including

information on apprenticeship, the types of work and jobs painters do and how to succeed in a career as a union painter. Dawn Pratt, Payne & Dolan, spoke the participants on how to apply for a job, how to interview successfully, and the “dos and don’ts” during interviews and on the job. She facilitated mock interviews with the class and answered questions from a union contractor perspective about working in the construction field.

WRTP/BIG STEP is also working with individual trades to identify green training certificates for apprentices and journey workers, for example we are in early discussions with the painters around lead renovator certifications.

Once again, **WRTP/BIG STEP** participated in the Building Advantage Career Fair. The Pathway's program is **WRTP/BIG STEP's** process for creating an avenue for youth to utilize the Work-based Learning Program. **WRTP/BIG STEP** collaborated with Building Advantage and Milwaukee Public Schools to send 135 Milwaukee area middle and high school students from five schools including Bradley Technical High School, School of Career and Technical Education, Hamilton High School, Cooper Middle School and Carson Academy, to the career fair in an effort to expose them to viable and exciting careers in the construction trades. In our efforts to prepare the future workforce, **WRTP/BIG STEP** participates in student field trips to demonstrate the day-to-day activities in real construction career pathways. The Building Advantage Career Fair provided an excellent opportunity for students to try out various trades including RoadBuilding trades first hand. Several area labor groups came together for the event and provided hands-on activities that excited students about pursuing careers the trades. **WRTP/BIG STEP** serves as a key link for those students interested in a skilled trades career. As the premier apprenticeship-preparation program, the BIG STEP tutoring program provides assistance in helping workers become ready to enter an apprenticeship.

The Joint Apprenticeship Training Director Meeting was hosted and facilitated by **WRTP/BIG STEP** and several trades (bricklayers, carpenters, sprinkler fitters, plumbers, cement masons, laborers, painters, electrical, and roofers) gathered to discuss collaboration around recruitment of candidates and meeting workforce requirements for upcoming projects. In addition to the Joint Director meeting,

WRTP/BIG STEP staff attends the Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC) and Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) meetings. It is especially important for staff to attend these meetings because we are better able to communicate information on our upcoming training classes and certificates with the industry in an effective manner. This allows for the training classes and tutoring to be customized for the demands of the industry as well as the basic requirements of the industry. At these meetings, questions were posed to industry as to what additional skills are needed to obtain and retain a job in the current job market. As well, we partner with industry to meet the training and certification opportunities for previous graduates that are out of work and qualify, including the City of Milwaukee’s Residents Preference Program (RPP), the Milwaukee Public School’s COIN certification, the WI DOT TrANS Road-building training, Section 3 certification, and MMSD certification.

Manufacturing Program Highlights

Industry Field Work

Employers

Industry field work includes meeting 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. Meetings with Masterson in January and February led to a planning Masterson Direct Hire Orientation in March for 10 open manufacturing positions. We are in discussions with several other manufacturers ramping up this spring and summer including HB Performance Systems who will be starting another training program in June.

Manufacturing Skills Committee (MSC)

As the regional workforce intermediary for the manufacturing sector, the **WRTP/BIG STEP** plays a key role in developing and coordinating industry partnerships. **WRTP/BIG STEP** Industry Field staff conducted field outreach to local and regional manufacturing employers and related labor partners to identify industry workforce needs and assess employment and career opportunities. The philosophy driving industry partnership development is to develop and expand workforce strategies that assist employers that want to grow and expand their workforce based on building a skilled and competitive workforce. The **WRTP/BIG STEP** utilizes several strategies to identify and reach manufacturers throughout the region. The primary outreach has been through the development of the **WRTP/BIG STEP** Manufacturing Skills Committee (MSC) – a group comprised of more than 40 regional manufacturing employers who have a shared interest in addressing their immediate and long term workforce needs. In addition, **WRTP/BIG STEP** staff work through direct relations with companies and labor affiliates, including the International Association of Machinists, United Steel Workers, and United Auto Workers. Finally, **WRTP/BIG STEP** has brought greater attention to the manufacturing community and **WRTP/BIG STEP** has been directly responding to referrals from the Mayor's Office and MAWIB.

Industry Needs Assessments

WRTP/BIG STEP worked with industry partners to complete a Manufacturing Needs Assessment in January 2013 of key economic indicators in the manufacturing sector. Over 140 Southeastern Wisconsin manufacturers were surveyed and the results show that overall manufacturing is strong in Wisconsin and workforce development needs are growing substantially with an aging and retiring skilled workforce. The needs assessment has begun conversations with numerous manufacturers with many more in our pipeline to design industry driven plans to meet the rising demand for workers in the sector. February, March and April were utilized to analyze the information gathered in the needs assessments and a report of the findings is in development. The assessment shows that manufacturing in the state is on the rise and the need for manufacturing employees is rising dramatically due to retirements, increases in production and industry growth. As a result, **WRTP/BIG STEP** has identified a significant amount of workforce development opportunity and is responding with increases in trainings and direct outreach to employers. An Executive Summary of the report will be released in May with a full report release expected in June.

Our outreach continues to local industry employers including Harley Davidson, OilGear, and Masterson under the Milwaukee County Ready to Work partnership. Placement of our manufacturing trainees has been a top priority. As a result of the survey, **WRTP/BIG STEP** is significantly increasing ELMS (Entry Level Manufacturing Skills) trainings with MSSC-Green Production Module (GPM) to meet the anticipated rise in demand. MSSC-GPM trainings has begun testing MSSC-GPM candidates with mixed results based on the curriculum provided by MSSC, so the trainings have been redesigned with internal curriculum developed to target the special training needs of, in particular, those with little experience in manufacturing. Internal assessments are done prior to official testing to identify any further training needs individually and those are addressed prior to certification testing. We now offer this enhanced training to all participants with weekly 5 day sessions from 8am to 12 noon that will be expanded to add a separate 1pm to 5pm session with more interested participants.

In partnership with HB Systems, WRTP/BIG STEP has placed a total of nearly 30 individuals into employment. GE Energy has also begun to place individuals from their training programs and through direct hire. Through our partnership with Harley-Davidson, we coordinated the training, AON testing and placement of 16 participants who completed a 40 hour paid training on site prior to placement with Harley-Davidson.

Transitional Jobs Pilot Program (Subsidized adult employment training) began in April / May with 14-15 trainees. We are ramping up to be fully certified to train and test in all 5 MSSC modules in approximately two months. In late April, WRTP/BIG STEP worked with the United Steel Workers to staff a joint table at their statewide conference on flexible workforce recruiting for the Michigan and Wisconsin groups.

Direct Hire Orientations/General Information Sessions

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. **WRTP/BIG STEP** doubled the number of GIS's offered beginning in January 2013 and throughout the spring. Additionally, **WRTP/BIG STEP** conducted outreach directly through communication with WIA Adult and Dislocated Workers Case Managers, Milwaukee Builds partner agencies, and receiving general referrals from other public partners.

In addition to the GIS, **WRTP/BIG STEP** conducted direct hire orientations and related recruitment sessions specifically geared for training and direct hire employment opportunities. For example on March 26th, nearly 50 people attended a direct hire orientation WRTP/BIG STEP held for Masterson Corporation for 20+ open positions including maintenance, technicians, production workers, electricians, pipefitters, etc., the recruitment was followed by interviews onsite at the Center of Excellence. The company immediately hired 9 individuals with more in training and recruitment ongoing. **WRTP/BIG STEP** is continuing to design more training sessions with these new hires and with incumbent workers at the Masterson facility. In addition to the Masterson Direct Hire Recruitment a General Manufacturing Direct Hire Orientation was held on March 28th.

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP (CWP)

The Milwaukee County Ready to Work partnership responds to the one of the most staggering problems in Milwaukee, long term unemployment among central city residents due to lack of education, training, and access to employment networks. Therefore, one of the fundamental goals of the Ready to Work is connecting unemployed residents to employment and developing sustainable career development to ensure long term growth and attachment to work.

Also in January, the highly successful fall 2013 pilot orientations, Resource Information Sessions (RIS) were incorporated into our overall orientation process. We expanded the RIS to include CWP partners from several agencies who work one on one with participants to identify barriers to employment they are facing and enroll them onsite into community based programs to remove those barriers including a new partnership in March with Legal Action of Wisconsin to assist participants otherwise eligible for our programs in obtaining driver's licenses, and assisting with other barriers to employment such as child support obligations. Participants are encouraged to return to **WRTP/BIG STEP** once they are career ready. **WRTP/BIG STEP** is currently running these sessions twice monthly and anticipates some results later this year. We are continuing to build the CWP through outreach that includes regular emails to over 80 community groups we work with regularly on coordination of services for our participants.

Community based organizations attending these meetings include the Northcott Neighborhood House, the Milwaukee Community Service Corps, the Milwaukee Christian Center, Legal Action of Milwaukee, Wisconsin Community Services, Interfaith Coalition of Milwaukee, Center for Self Sufficiency and the Wisconsin Seasonal Workforce Coalition. The Community Workforce Partnership's goals are to coordinate, expand and enhance, **WRTP/BIG STEP**'s community outreach efforts by coordinating our programming with existing community based activities. By coordinating referrals between agencies to ensure that underprivileged community residents find our programs, are prepared to enter them and have access to the full breath of community support available we ensure they are successful while training and transitioning into their new career pathways.

Through the CWP and working in collaboration with the Association of General Contractors of Greater Milwaukee, Milwaukee Building and Construction Trades Council, the City of Milwaukee – DWD, Milwaukee County, WI-DOT, and several skilled trades, **WRTP/BIG STEP** is front and center developing a plan to address the major construction industry workforce needs in light of the Lakefront Redevelopment construction projects planned for 2013-2015. These projects are no minor task, they will require a massive construction workforce and **WRTP/BIG STEP** is working to ensure the construction projects are designed to utilize a local Milwaukee County workforce and build the economic strength of the entire region. Agreements are already in place to ensure that the residential participation and workforce requirements are successfully implemented on these projects. As the primary certification entity for the RPP program, **WRTP/BIG STEP** will be a primary workforce source for the industry partners bidding on these projects. In working with the trades, we are assessing all the major construction projects (Potawatomi, Froedtert Hospital's new transplant center, the Zoo interchange, etc) to ensure that an accurate assessment of the regional workforce needs is done with an eye on the current journey worker to apprenticeship lists. Each trade is coming to the table with

their preliminary apprenticeship needs assessments and discussing how to build their industry locally and avoid contractors having to go outside the local workforce. A plan is in development to utilize **WRTP/BIG STEP's** ramped up tutoring and Entry Level Construction Skills program to fill those empty slots in apprenticeship lists in several skilled trades with a local workforce ready for apprenticeship.

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, and ramped up significant field work within our targeted employment sectors.

	Q3	Q2	Q1	Totals	Projected to date*
Milwaukee County Residents - Recruitment & Assessment:	337	340	492	1,169	825
Milwaukee County Residents - Career Pathway:	102	106	217	425	270
Placed in Employment	74	31	44	149	200

The following list of construction and manufacturing companies hired **WRTP/BIG STEP** participants in Q3:

Actual Electrical	GE Energy	Michael's Construction
Alpine Plumbing	Hanel Corporation	Onsite Staffing
Choice Construction Company Inc	Harley-Davidson	Pieper Electric Inc.
Coates Electric	HB Performance Systems	Quad Graphics
Common Links	Hetzel-Sanfillipo	Quality Insulation
Craftmaster Painting	Hirshfeild Services	Racine Home Insulators, LLC
Direct TV	Lake Country Heating & Cooling	Staff Electric
DRS	Larosa Landscaping	Triada-Greenheck
Express Temp Agency - National HME	Marshall Erecting	Uihlein Electric Co., Inc
Floor 360	Masterson Company	United States Alliance Fire Protection, Inc
Frontier Airline	McDowell Construction	Zenith Tech Inc.

The initial successes of Milwaukee County Ready to Work in the early phase of the program are due to **WRTP/BIG STEP's** well developed formula. The Milwaukee County Ready to Work partnership enables us to identify and plan for a major scaling of programming to meet the industry demands forecasted in manufacturing and construction. **WRTP/BIG STEP** is on track to meet and exceed the goals of the program to serve 1,000 new participants and place 500 Milwaukee County residents in family supporting careers.