



Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP/BIG STEP)
Quarterly Narrative Report (Q5): August 1, 2013 to October 31, 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. 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 Five (Q5) 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.

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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. For example, WRTP/BIG STEP collaborated with the Laborers Union Local 113 to help facilitate a confined space awareness course and an asbestos worker certification class. Both of these courses were based on a specific contractor request and allowed the Laborer's Union to help upgrade their current worker's skills for future projects.

WRTP/BIG STEP's work with the Bricklayer's Union to implement workforce strategies and promote green training courses through the GJIF initiative leveraged further positive outcomes that related to upgrading current and incumbent workers.

WRTP/BIG STEP industry staff also hosted the monthly training director meeting with several of the trades represented including: Bricklayers, Carpenters, Electrical, Steamfitters, Painters, Cement Masons, Plumbers and Building Advantage. Several issues discussed included continued outreach efforts, trade awareness days to be held at WRTP/BIG STEP, and the Apprenticeship marketing strategy by Building Advantage and the Building Trades.

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.

A key reason the JATC's are reaching out to partner with WRTP/BIG STEP on this effort is to ensure that when a candidates applying for an Apprenticeship meet the basic minimum requirements. Expanding workforce development outreach is even more important now since the number of retirees in the skilled trades continues to increase while at the same time, the industry is finally emerging from the recession.

From these conversations, the Apprenticeship Awareness Fair was developed, giving the industry the opportunity to connect and recruit individuals to the workforce. So far, the fair has seen great results, and will continue to be an annual event hosted at WRTP/BIG STEP scheduled in January .

However, more needed to be done, and in talking even further with industry, they identified another way to connect individuals to careers in the trades. Thus, the Apprenticeship Awareness Information Days were born. To date, three trades have taken part in this opportunity, and WRTP/BIG STEP is ready to schedule more dates. The Apprenticeship Awareness Info Days' goals are to educate individuals on:

- What it means to be a construction trades person
- The benefits of careers in the construction industry
- Details of each specific apprenticeship program, and the process to enter
- Different ways in which their apprenticeship programs assist potential recruits

This initiative was developed to give useful and factual information to potential candidates prior to making a decision to apply for an apprenticeship. While emphasizing the very real need to manage the expectations of individuals interested in a skilled trade career, these events also allow the JATC's to work directly with potential WRTP/BIG STEP candidates and learn the high caliber of the potential pool interested in their particular skilled trade.

An added benefit of this effort is that WRTP/BIG STEP is able to feed these candidates into training classes to get them more experience. This will ultimately make potential candidates more qualified, experienced and have more confidence when applying for an apprenticeship. WRTP/ BIG STEP has scheduled OSHA 10 classes, Asbestos Awareness and confined space classes with candidates from the Apprenticeship Awareness Info Days. WRTP/BIG STEP works closely with the City of Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Public School District, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, the Department of Transportation and the housing authority to certify and issue a variety of workforce requirement certificates for the construction industry throughout the region.

Contractors, labor and workers rely on these critical WRTP/BIG STEP services to ensure they are meeting workforce structural requirements throughout the duration of the project. As a result hundreds of individuals are referred to WRTP/BIG STEP to receive the certifications necessary to work on the job. Some of these include Residential Preference Program (RPP), Section 3, Communities in Need (COIN) and others as required on a project by project basis. This work will continue and expand as we begin new projects in development in the Madison community.

WRTP/BIG STEP is in the early phases of a planned statewide construction industry needs assessment that is slated to begin in fall of 2013. The assessment will be in phases and with result expected before the 2014 construction season begins in Wisconsin.

A. Industry Assistance

- a. JAC meetings they are concerned about RPP and meeting those workforce requirements. Our industry coordinator is working to help coordinate this and make sure they really are meeting and prepared to meet these requirements for all the projects currently and in the planning process. We are working to specifically with contractors to identify how the current workforce is designed to ensure they are meeting their requirements on projects and are able to plan to build their workforces to ensure they are able to meet these requirements as all the projects begin to ramp up in 2014.
- b. NML deconstruction starts in December 2013.

B. Workforce Assistance

- a. We are working with Milwaukee County to design a Milwaukee County workforce composition requirements workshop that is geared toward contractors and labor unions. We are facilitating the workshop in the Center of Excellence and reaching out to contractors and labor, so that everyone is understands these requirements.
- b. We are working with several trades on green classes and training to get them back to work because they need more skills to be employable. Also holding OSHA10 classes – We are holding both night and day time classes for both entry level and incumbent workers.

C. Future Workforce

- a. Road building – Classes are booked for classes starting in November. We expect approximately 10 individuals in the class including laid off workers and unemployed new entrants to the construction industry.
- b. Industry led recruitment and strategies – A major construction project led by a healthcare consortium will be starting on a new facility that will be located directly in a blighted Milwaukee community. As a result of the location of the project, the workforce requirements will be in effect including RPP/COIN, Section 3, CDBG and HUD requirements. The developer and healthcare consortium are working in advance with WRTP/BIG STEP staff to design a plan to recruit, train and hire workers for the project directly from the surrounding community. The project itself is not yet approved to move forward, but we are assisting in the planning stages of the project workforce development strategy and will be the primary provider of the recruitment, training, certification and hiring strategy for the workforce needed to complete this project.
- c. New training programs with the Heat and Frost union are in the early development planning phase.

At JATC 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. WRTP/BIG STEP is also working with individual trades to identify green training certificates for apprentices and journey workers.

We are continuing to work as a key strategic partner with the City of Milwaukee, NML and other partners in the design of the workforce requirements around the Lakefront Redesign and the major construction projects surrounding the multi-year plans.

Training and Career Preparation Activities

Another ELCS-Road Building class is in the planning and recruitment phase and scheduled to begin in on November 5th. We expect this class to include hands on training modules in conjunction with several trades. Our participants will be well prepared for entry into apprenticeship and be better equipped for road building work as it continues to arise.

The WRTP/BIG STEP recruited for two to Entry Level Construction Skills-UnIndentured Electrical Construction Program (ELCS-UECP) training classes to meet the needs of electrical contractors in the southeastern region of the state the classes were run July 30-August 8, and August 7-15.

WRTP/BIG STEP is hosting several monthly OSHA 10 classes for our tutoring candidates as well as incumbent workers to emphasize the importance of safety on the job site.

Bricklayers ran an incumbent worker training in tuck pointing and restoration on August 27. The Bricklayers Union has held several classes in collaboration with WRTP/BIG STEP in September: Fly Ash Class Restoration Training, Air Barrier, and Caulking and Sealants. Providing green training classes will help their current workers be more competitive, current, and prepared for contractors with projects that require this type of specialized certification and training.

Manufacturing Program Highlights

Industry Field Work

Our outreach continues to local industry employers with a focus on the importance of green manufacturing certifications including HB Performance Systems, Harley Davidson, GE Energy, SpinCraft, Masterlock, Preferred Brush, Miller Brewing, PM Plastics and Masterson. Harley Davidson is in the planning phases of hiring up to 200 workers into their seasonal workforce, and in August agreed to place priority on individuals with Manufacturing Skills Standards Council – Green Production Module (MSSC-GPM) training and certifications.

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. Key local companies actively considering utilization of the IMT include HB Performance Systems, Spincraft and Masterlock.

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.*
- c. Harley Davidson- *We are working on a pool of candidates for the seasonal workforce hiring process in November through January. HD will hire as many as 200 candidates with a preference in entry level positions given to MSSC-GPM certificate holders and trainees in WRTP/BIG STEP programming.*
- 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) – *WRTP/BIG STEP will be their primary training facilitator; they've gone from 40-180 employees in a year and are discussing the potential to add 100 more through us. Also interested in IMT and a pre-employment machine operator training.*
- f. Pure Power Technologies- *Looking for staffing help for 40 new employees considering WRTP/BIG STEP as a training/direct hire partner.*
- 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. Masterson Company – *Masterson has now hired a total of 17 individuals in two on the job training programs (OJT) that include ELMS, MSSC-GPM and up to 300 hours of training on site at Masterson. The program has been very successful for both the company and the participants and the contract we signed with them has room for another 5 employees to be hired before the end of the calendar year.*
- i. Ocean Spray – *We are working with Ocean Spray to design IMT apprenticeship training programs for over 100 employees in the next year.*
- j. *We are also working with and in discussions with Preferred Brush and Miller Brewing Company around workforce development opportunities.*

Training and Career Preparation Activities

Masterson's first on the job training class continued throughout July. In addition, a new recruitment, orientation, and interviews for another 9 more open positions with Masterson were held July 23-25 and on the job training class began on August 7th with 9 participants. The class will include training on site in WRTP/BIG STEP's Center of Excellence with an Introduction to MSSC-Green Production Module and then continue on the job in Masterson's facility for several months. In addition, the Masterson contract leaves open the potential to hire another 5 candidates throughout the fall should Masterson have open positions.

The Masterson OJT class that began in August will include training on site in WRTP/BIG STEP's Center of Excellence with an Introduction to MSSC-Green Production Module and then continue on the job in Masterson's facility for several months. In addition, the Masterson contract leaves open the potential to hire another 5 candidates throughout the fall should Masterson have open positions.

In August, HB hired another 14 new candidates (some from the June class) into their manufacturing plant out of WRTP/BIG STEP programming. HB is planning to continue to hire entry level candidates off our training lists and has scheduled four more trainings through the fall to include 10-12 participants each month for a total of 40 new hires by January 2014.

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 again in August, September and October. The RIS is designed to assist individuals with barriers to program enrollment and employment with referrals to our Community Workforce Partnership.

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

We have significantly increased the number of students in our Introduction to MSSC Green Production Module tutoring program to engage and prepare more candidates for careers in manufacturing through out Q5.

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.

Work has begun in MPS schools with several programs that include the Tech Terns program highlighted in this Milwaukee Business Journal article: http://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/blog/2013/10/bradley-tech-students-don-hard-hats-at.html?ana=e_mil_rdup&s=newsletter&ed=2013-10-18

The Pathways to Prosperity program in Milwaukee has been successfully launched and is receiving initial praise and excitement in the community: <http://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/print-edition/2013/10/11/pathways-program-launching-in-area.html>

Pipeline Development

- We have significantly increased the number of students in our Introduction to MSSC Green Production Module tutoring program to prepare more candidates for careers in manufacturing and the new students are continuing in those tutoring programs. In conjunction with our work with industry raising the profile and importance of MSSC-GPM training in new hires, in August, manufacturing updated its training strategy to improve engagement among participants first entering our programs. All participants are now offered an ELMS1 course that includes an Intro to MSSC-GPM training as soon as their orientations and assessments are completed. By offering the training immediately, we are able to engage more participants and keep them involved on the front end, while having a pool of ready to train/place candidates in specific jobs. With increased industry demands, the strategy is intended to decrease the time it takes to prepare the candidate for open positions. Based on industry feedback requesting that we find ways to decrease the time from selecting candidates to their start date, forty individuals took the ELMS1 course in August and another 20 in September.
- In response to changes in the way our manufacturers are requesting ready to work employment placements, WRTP/BIG STEP made some changes to the delivery of service model for some of our trainings in this industry. We will continue to offer ELMS certifications as well as all the courses included in those certifications. After discussions with several of our major employers, we redesigned the training programs to add flexibility and to increase the numbers of work ready participants in our direct placement pools. In the past, we only held training programs when there was a specific job order for those positions. We have identified no less than 400 open manufacturing positions in the Milwaukee area within the next 6 months and all the employers (PM Plastics, Harley Davidson, HB Performance Systems, ATI, etc) have agreed that they will hire from our direct placement trainees as the positions begin to open. The employers have agreed to place a priority on hiring individuals certified in MSSC-GPM with a second priority on those trained even if they are not fully certified. As a result to these “softer” hiring agreements, we have begun to train larger numbers of individuals in MSSC-GPM with the courses offered immediately upon completion of orientation and assessment activities. By engaging individuals immediately in our programming, participation is increasing, and we are better able to serve each individual’s needs. ELMS essential skills training courses are then offered on a modular/“chunking” basis so participants are able to choose the courses most appropriate to their skills and needs, for example, a blueprint reading course and a basic math course are offered every other week, an individual’s training plan is designed based on each individuals’ goals and appropriate to their needs. An individual may choose to sign up for the blueprint course, the math course or both depending on competency based training plan. In this way, the person testing at 12.9 math level is not required to sit through a basic math course and can instead focus on obtaining the courses that will be most helpful to them in their workforce development pathway. The ELMS courses are all a part of our standard ELMS curriculum and have not been newly created, but instead the delivery method has been slightly

modified, so we believe no course curriculum changes are required. The ELMS training throughout September with an emphasis on MSSC GPM trainings were held throughout September and we expect to begin the new delivery method of training to those completing the green portion of the training beginning in October. Manufacturers will then pull new employees from our pool of individuals who have completed Green and ELMS trainings throughout the fall since they will be well prepared to enter a manufacturer's internal training programs.

- In addition, BIG STEP is increasing 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.
- In August, we held Apprenticeship Awareness Days with the Laborers, Carpenters, and Plumbers Unions. BIG STEP Tutoring participants and other community members were invited to learn about each skilled trade from a representative out of the local. Apprenticeship requirements and details about the apprenticeship process as well as an introduction to the various careers and types of work done by each trade were topics covered during the events. In September, the apprenticeship training directors from the Plumbers, 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. In October, the Plumbers, Painters and Laborers held Apprenticeship Awareness Days.
- 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.
- We are continuing to work with the JATC's and with individual participants to upgrade skills and certifications. We ran OSHA10 and Asbestos Awareness classes with incumbent workers in August and utilized the contact with participants to offer further mentoring and support to the incumbent workforce. Through the Bricklayer's training courses, we are offering skills upgrades that included in August classes including Caulking and Sealants, Spray foam Air Barrier, Tuck pointing and Restoration, Fluid Applied Air Barrier, and Pervious Concrete
- In conjunction with our work with industry raising the profile and importance of MSSC-GPM training in new hires, in August, manufacturing updated its training strategy to improve engagement among participants first entering our programs. All participants are now offered access to the WRTP Manufacturing lab which provides tutoring and career development support for individuals needing to prep for direct employment or pre-employment skills training, includes an Intro to MSSC-GPM training as soon as their orientations and assessments are completed. By offering access to the Manufacturing Lab, we are able to engage more participants and keep them involved on the front end, while having a pool of ready to train/place candidates in specific jobs. With increased industry demands, the strategy is intended to decrease the time it takes to prepare the candidate for open positions. Based on industry feedback requesting that we find ways to decrease the time from selecting candidates to their start date, forty individuals took the ELMS1 course in August and another 20 are signed up for September.

COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP (CWP)

WRTP/BIG STEP worked actively with the Community Workforce Partnership in Q5 to bring community based resources to our participants throughout our programming. Community based organizations partnering with WRTP/BIG STEP include the Northcott Neighborhood House, the Milwaukee Community Service Corps, the

Milwaukee Christian Center, Legal Action of Wisconsin, Riverworks, Wisconsin Community Services, Interfaith Coalition of Milwaukee, Center for Self Sufficiency, Legal Action of Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Seasonal Workforce Coalition. Discussions continued with the Center for Veteran's Issues, the Milwaukee Homeless Veteran's Initiative, DryHootch (AODA veteran peer counseling) and other organizations serving the veteran community to more deliberately serve veteran's with a variety of workforce access issues. One Hope Made Strong has become our newest community partner to feed our pipeline with community based residents into our training and industry certification programs,

The WRTP/BIG STEP maintains direct relationships with the MAWIB, the HIRE Center, the YWCA of Greater Milwaukee and UMOS to ensure information regarding upcoming activities is shared with their clients in a timely and organized manner. In addition, WRTP/BIG STEP worked actively with the local workforce development system and one stop job centers to recruit and identify candidates to participate in General Information Sessions as well as Manufacturing Orientation Sessions.

Referrals from these agencies are on the rise. 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.

We continue the work reported in previous reports with emphasis being placed on the individual needs of our participants, 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. In addition, we have partnered with Legal Action of Wisconsin to offer legal assistance around driver's licensing and other barriers to employment such as child support issues. 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. We are in the process of designing a program to offer full CDL licensing to our TrANS participants as well as to our BIG STEP Tutoring participants. We anticipate this program to start by the end of 2013.

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 Highlights

In fall of 2013, WRTP/BIG STEP received several honors both locally and nationally.

- The national voice of the construction industry owners' association, the Construction User's Roundtable (CURT) announced their 2013 award winners at their annual national convention in Tucson, AZ. Among their 2013 award winners for best Workforce Development nationally is the Center of Excellence- WRTP/BIG STEP based in Milwaukee, WI. According to the CURT website: <http://www.curt.org/Workforce-Development-Award-2013.aspx>: "The CURT Workforce Development Awards are designed to provide significant national and international recognition for extraordinary, exemplary, and innovative training and education programs which encourage individuals to pursue a career in the construction industry and/or enhance an individual's construction skills. The CURT

Workforce Development Award winners represent the best-in-class in a highly competitive process. We encourage you to learn more about what they are doing and implement these leading practices in your organization.” The Construction Users Roundtable® was founded by - and is driven by - many of the largest and most successful construction owners in the United States to provide the global industry a strong, singular voice to help owners’ effect positive, meaningful change and improvements.

- On September 25 in Milwaukee and on October 1st in Madison the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago held Economic Development Forums based on the WRTP/BIG STEP report: Manufacturing Better Opportunity and A Stronger Economy. Over 150 community leaders attended the events focused on highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the current and future manufacturing economy in the Midwest and nationally. The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago stated in its information on the event: “Central to the discussion will be programs that the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) has built over the past year that work with their partners from community, business and labor. This experience is relevant to strengthening the manufacturing sector, to building and broadening opportunity, and to developing public policies at the state and local level that help secure that connection.”
- WRTP/BIG STEP has been recognized nationally as one of the nation’s top performing non profits in the workforce development field. <http://trust.guidestar.org/2013/10/08/new-16-high-impact-workforce-development-nonprofits-identified-by-experts/>

In 2013 WRTP/BIG STEP took major steps to “green” its training curriculum. The new “green modules” in construction and manufacturing have provided WRTP/BIG STEP with unique and valuable opportunities to work both internally and externally in the community and with our industrial partners to facilitate what is becoming a significant cultural shift in the greater Milwaukee region around the perception of the value of green training. Internally, the program has allowed us the opportunity to evaluate and reinvigorate our training programs with a green focus. This in turn has translated to extensive opportunities for us to go back into quite a few manufacturers and reopen conversations around the value of green training to their bottom line in production as well as a tool for them to evaluate an employee’s potential to learn on the worksite. These conversations have extended beyond our usual partners and opened new doors throughout the greater Milwaukee region’s growing manufacturing environment. The changes are not just in manufacturing however, as we also are seeing a structural change in the way skilled labor is considering their training programs. The Bricklayers courses for example are an integral part of the work we are doing with the bricklayers as a result of conversation we originally had within the Ready to Work grant structure around offering trainings with green components. The eight green training modules that were identified are very valuable for bricklayers. These peripheral effects can be found throughout the construction and manufacturing industries in greater Milwaukee region and WRTP/BIG STEP considers them at least as valuable as the hard number counts of trainings and placements under this specific grant’s guidelines.

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

| Services Completed | Q5 | Q4 | Q3 | Q2 | Q1 | Totals to date | Projected to date* |
|--|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|--------------------|
| Milwaukee County Residents - Recruitment & Assessment | 389 | 396 | 337 | 340 | 492 | 1565 | 975 |
| Milwaukee County Residents - Career Pathway | 165 | 142 | 102 | 106 | 217 | 567 | 450 |
| Placed in Employment | 103 | 162 | 74 | 31 | 44 | 414 | 450 |

The following list of construction and manufacturing companies hired WRTP/BIG STEP participants in Q5:

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aeroloc, Inc | Gordon Solutions | OGC Construction |
| Arteaga Construction | Grunau Electric | Payne and Dolan |
| Badger Environmental | HB Performance Systems | Rotaform |
| Belonger Corporation | Hooper | Strattec |
| Brothers All Steam Carpet | Illingworth Kilgust Mechanical Inc. | Superior Labor Solutions |
| Building Services, Inc. | Integrity Environmental | Tighe Contracting Inc. |
| Burkhart Construction | JM Brennan | Tramont Corp. |
| Butters-Fetting Company | KS Energy Services Inc. | Triad Construction |
| CG Schmidt | Langer Roofing | Trillium Construction |
| Cornerstone Plumbing | Lemberg Electric Co., Inc | Uihlein Electric Co., Inc |
| Day & Zimmerman | M.A. Mortenson | United Scrap Metal |
| Everdry Waterproofing | Masterson | UPS |
| GE Energy | Midwest Stairs and Iron | Veit Construction |
| General Mills | Milwaukee Brewing Company | W.J. Sheard |
| Global Power Componets | Niffin | Wingra Stone |

The successes of Milwaukee County Ready to Work as we close into the last quarter of the project are due to **WRTP/BIG STEP's** well developed 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 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 by the end of Q6, January 31, 2014.