

Strengthening New York's Workforce

2022 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT





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About Us

The Workforce Development Institute (WDI) is a statewide non-profit that works to increase opportunities for all New Yorkers to succeed in the workforce while earning family-sustaining wages. We use our workforce expertise, data analysis, and flexible funding to facilitate projects that help labor unions, employers, educational institutions, and other workforce partners think and act differently regarding hiring, training, educating, and retaining an inclusive and productive workforce.

Our true focus is on the worker, ensuring all working people have opportunities for economic self-sufficiency. Each project we support must include one or more measurable, positive, worker-centric outcomes, such as skill development, job growth, retention, placement, or career exploration.

Although the projects we support vary, they are influenced by our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and job quality. Before getting involved in a potential project with an employer, we review their wages against regional industry averages and living wage standards. We also look deeper to understand business culture, benefits, scheduling, advancement opportunities, and turnover, and how they affect the overall experience for their workers.

We are collaborative by nature and by design. Our work would not be possible without the contributions of multiple partners bringing complementary strengths. Our involvement is most often demand-driven, meaning we are invited into a project, conversation, or initiative, to address challenges that existing resources cannot resolve.

In the emerging Adult-Use Cannabis industry, we developed the Cannabis Workforce Initiative in collaboration with the New York School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University. Our work prioritizes diversity, equity, and quality jobs to promote social equity and economic recovery to communities negatively impacted by the “War on Drugs.”

We developed the Statewide Pre-Apprentice Program in partnership with the New York State Building and Construction Trades Council. The program works to advance opportunities for individuals from underrepresented populations to gain the foundational skills, technical knowledge, and work experience to qualify for Union Building Trades Apprenticeships.

Common functions we perform include:

- ★ Identifying a problem/challenge (for one organization or many)
- ★ Serving as workforce consultants on a wide array of workforce issues
- ★ Connecting organizations with resources to meet their needs
- ★ Piloting or testing new programs, technologies, or methods
- ★ Facilitating projects by convening partners and leveraging resources
- ★ Providing flexible and responsive funding for projects

Our Child Care Subsidy Facilitated Enrollment Program (CCSFEP) aims to provide stability for working families through equitable access to quality, affordable child care. We work closely with partners to administer income-based child care subsidies, and to increase the awareness of the child care crisis beyond traditional stakeholders to push toward solutions that improve outcomes for working families.

Our value is our depth of expertise and our statewide presence that empowers us to identify successful programs, and pursue opportunities to scale them to other industries or regions of the state. As new sectors emerge and create opportunities for workers, we continue to look for ways to improve the lives of workers and *Strengthen New York's Workforce*.

Improving Career Access for All Workers

New York has incredible diversity by any standard of the term, yet representation is often lacking in some segments of the workforce. Inequalities persist for many workers, whether based on race, gender identity, disability, veteran status, economic opportunity, geography, or other factors. WDI is committed to closing these gaps by supporting programs ensuring equitable opportunities for advancement of all individuals.

Where opportunity is not evenly distributed, inclusion can only be achieved by intentional efforts to create more seats at the table. WDI has worked with partners in a variety of industries to develop tools and implement strategies to help workers find opportunities.

WESTERN NY AREA LABOR FEDERATION (Buffalo)

In partnership with the **BlueGreen Alliance**, the **WNY ALF** is leveraging the expertise and relationships of the WNY labor community to create a Worker Empowerment Center to develop programming to raise living conditions and close the race-wealth gap in the region. WDI is supporting the first phase of this project: a Project Director to convene stakeholders, conduct a needs assessment, and draft an action plan.

THEA BOWMAN HOUSE (Utica)

This community-based organization worked with WDI to develop and pilot Implicit Bias training for early childhood educators to examine their own biases and understand the effects of childhood trauma. Trainees developed strategies for healing, and building self-esteem and self-confidence to give every child a positive start. This pilot will soon spread to other regions of the state.

People who are under-resourced and/or entangled in the cycle of generational poverty face barriers to employment that can include challenges of transportation, child care, housing instability, and food insecurity. Systemic barriers cannot be overcome solely by talent and determination. It can take a network of partners to create wraparound services and facilitate training and connections to provide entry points to careers.

YOUTHBUILD

This nonprofit educational organization serves low-income and at-risk youth, particularly people of color and immigrants, in achieving the skills necessary to enter the workforce. WDI provided resources including laptops, PPE, tools, and uniforms for educational and career programming across NYC.

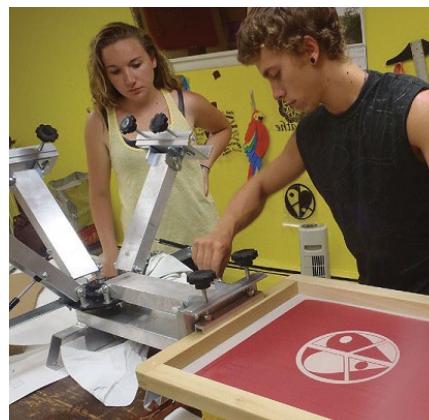
Programs included:

- Youth Action YouthBuild
- Central Family Life Center
- South Bronx Economic Development Center
- Queens Community House
- DREAMS YouthBuild
- The Hope Program



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED **TRANSITION SERVICES (Albany)**

This nonprofit provides industry-specific coaching and training to young adults. WDI funded laptops to improve access to technology for virtual education and job searches. This project also supports a new five-year NYS Department of Education contract partnering with Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood to link career planning and family planning for high schoolers.



Our state continues to be an aspirational beacon for people from around the world who come to make this state their home and seek opportunities to advance their lives. For individuals with limited English language proficiency, there can be barriers to advancement and issues of safety on the job.

EMMA'S TORCH (Brooklyn)

This nonprofit operates a catering and hospitality earn-while-you-learn program for refugees, asylees, and survivors of human trafficking. The program develops professional skills including resume writing, tech literacy, and conversational English. Graduates are placed in an established network of employers in hospitality.

DUFOUR PASTRY KITCHENS (Bronx)

This food manufacturer provided English language training for production workers and supervisors, to foster a culture of inclusion by ensuring that all employees can effectively communicate with one another and operate as a team.

MHXCo FOAM COMPANY (Amsterdam)

This manufacturer of foam products provided machine operator training for Spanish-speaking employees, including translating training documents from English to Spanish and preparing bilingual trainers to deliver the training.

Workers with disabilities face above-average unemployment rates regardless of their educational attainment. There are many great organizations that serve individuals with disabilities, developing extensive employer relationships, and ensuring their own employees have the tools they need to produce positive outcomes for the people they serve.

LUV MICHAEL (Manhattan)

WDI supported the development and delivery of soft skills training tailored to autistic young adults ages 18-25. This training introduced 12 participants to workplace culture in an effort to reduce employment barriers resulting from a lack of experience with interviewing, email etiquette, and managing workplace stress.

THE ARC ONTARIO (Canandaigua)

Career counselors participated in the TEACCH Training Employment Services program to serve autistic individuals with support from WDI. Participants learned about adult learning styles, characteristics and challenges of autism, and strategies to help them better assist individuals to obtain and maintain employment.

In areas of our state with lower population density, it can be difficult to find job opportunities within a reasonable commuting distance. For individuals without transportation or reliable child care, these gaps can be even more challenging to close.

RURAL & MIGRANT MINISTRY (Cornwall-on-Hudson)

The Youth Economic Group (YEG) created a rural, youth-led cooperative business, **Bags for Justice**. This culturally diverse group of high school students works collaboratively to design and produce bags and t-shirts that result in work-readiness skills and economic opportunities. WDI support included transportation, and equipment to assist with new designs.

JEFFERSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE (Watertown)

Child care industry closures during the pandemic, produced "child care deserts." JCC developed the **Regulated Home Child Care Training Program** to help individuals open child care businesses, providing employment opportunities and meeting demand for child care options. WDI assisted with computers for virtual coursework.

Supporting the Workers Who Serve Our Communities

WDI's roots are in organized labor and we continue to branch out with new partnerships, including supporting programs to increase awareness and access to high-quality union jobs. We also support pilot training programs to ensure members have the most modern skills and the safest working conditions as they build and serve our communities.

Healthcare

Healthcare workers have faced unimaginable challenges over the past two years, including daily challenges of the pandemic, staffing shortages, and maintaining mental and physical health in high-stress environments. As these challenges compound, we must remove barriers to open healthcare careers to everyone who heeds the call to care for our families and communities.

1199SEIU

This healthcare union's members provide frontline care in many hospitals and nursing facilities. WDI supported training on technical and foundational skills, with projects including:

- Closing the funding gap for nurses who complete training but forego certification/licensure exams due to the financial burden. This project ensures nearly 300 nurses will enter the field at a time of major shortages nationwide.



- Ensuring members have the baseline digital skills to use the union's learning management system, allowing them to advance their skills by attending online training.
- Supporting tablets for Home Healthcare Aides to record patient information in the field, and modernize their skills with access to training programs, including job-related skills, English language learning, and preparation programs for U.S. Citizenship.

Public Sector & Education

Workers serving in municipal, county, and state workforces support education, provide critical services, and ensure public safety. As the workforce changes due to demographic shifts and retirements, WDI is supporting the training and retention of the next generation of public servants.

CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (CSEA)

As one of New York's largest public sector unions, CSEA represents workers in school districts, state and local governments. WDI supports members across a broad spectrum of job titles with online and in-person training including: CDL training, health and wellness, and Civil Service test preparation to advance their careers.

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS

The Nation's largest higher education union is embarking on a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion capacity building project that will result in development of a DEI growth plan, new educational materials, and an internal network of DEI trainers and facilitators, engaging thousands of members across SUNY in DEI trainings and workshops.

Public Transit

Public transit workers keep us moving and provide a critical link for working people. Vehicles and equipment are changing rapidly, including a shift to zero-emission vehicles, and transit organizations and community stakeholders working together to find solutions where bus routes are not viable.

CNY CENTRO Bus (ATU Local 580) (Central NY)

Training on diagnostic and repair capacity for diesel and natural gas engines maintenance staff.

WORKERS TRANSPORT, INC (TWU Local 320) (NYC)

Development of a trade school curriculum for bicycle and e-bike mechanics, as these vehicles can be used to close gaps in service areas. The long-term goal of the project is to turn the model into a NYS Registered Apprenticeship.

Advancing the Workforce That Builds Our State

Union Building Trades Registered Apprenticeships provide state-of-the-art skills through classroom instruction and work experience, with apprentices earning while they learn rather than incurring debt. Training continues for Journeyworkers, evolving to work with new materials or technologies, to work in fast-changing industries such as clean energy, and to maintain the highest level of worker safety on the jobsite.

WDI's support included the following select projects:

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 30 (NYC)

Training in safe operation and maintenance of changing technology in high-pressure steam boilers as building owners improve energy efficiency.

IRONWORKERS LOCAL 417 (Hudson Valley)

Training for enhanced welding skills for certifications from American Welding Society and NYS Department of Transportation, opening opportunities on a greater variety of projects.

PLUMBERS & STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 21 (Lower Hudson Valley)

Assisted with purchase of filtration and ventilation system to ensure member safety during welding training.

PLASTERERS & CEMENT

MASONs LOCAL 9 (Western NY)

Assisted with the purchase of virtual reality equipment to train members in fireproofing using a safe and highly effective technique.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS (Statewide)

Supporting the installation of equipment for hands-on training on the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, preparing members for the exponential increase in demand for charging infrastructure.



WDI supported additional projects with local unions from the following trades:

- ★ International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers
- ★ International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators
- ★ International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- ★ International Brotherhood of Teamsters
- ★ International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
- ★ International Union of Operating Engineers
- ★ International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
- ★ Laborers' International Union of North America
- ★ Operative Plasterers and Cement Masons International Association
- ★ Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers
- ★ United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters
- ★ United Brotherhood of Carpenters
- ★ United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers, and Allied Workers

Made in New York, Made by New Yorkers

WDI's Manufacturing Grant Program is entering our tenth year of supporting hundreds of projects that have a positive impact on thousands of workers. Beyond grant funding, our staff share strategies and forge connections that open new doors for businesses and their employees.

Apprenticeship was once a standard practice for manufacturers to train to their specific needs, while showing employees a path for advancement. After going relatively dormant for a generation, this earn-while-you-learn blending of classroom training and practical experience has returned. WDI has supported portions of apprenticeship programs, including:

KNOWLTON TECHNOLOGIES (Watertown)

Training for electrical and instrumental control employees in the company's apprenticeship program for members of **United Steel Workers Local 1450**.

ROCHESTER TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING ASSOCIATION (Rochester)

RTMA coordinated Mastercam design software training for this multi-employer apprenticeship for businesses including ADAC Design, LSI Solutions, Genesee Global Group, and PGM.



Companies seek assistance to train existing employees and new hires on technical skills that keep equipment running, and process improvements in accordance with industry standards. WDI has supported a wide variety of targeted projects, including:

MORTON SALT (Silver Springs)

An internationally recognized manufacturer of food-grade salt products, the company trained employees on basic and advanced welding techniques that are critical to plant operations. Employees are members of **United Steel Workers Local 625**.

OPTIPRO SYSTEMS, LLC (Ontario)

This precision optics manufacturer trained staff in Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing and operation of Coordinate Measuring Machines for precision crafting of parts for U.S. Government projects.

VANDEMARK CHEMICAL INC. (Lockport)

This manufacturer of chemical components for pharmaceuticals, personal care, and other products, trained in LEAN manufacturing with specialization in troubleshooting and preventive maintenance to reduce downtime.

SWISSWAY INC (Huntington Station)

In the extensive aerospace industry on Long Island, AS9100C certification is a must to do business. This manufacturer of small parts and assemblies for airplanes and helicopters upskilled its entire staff to meet the highest standards of the industry.

HUNTER & HILSBERG (Homer)

As a producer of jellies, jams, and preserves, the company growth required a larger facility. They pursued Safe Quality Food (SQF) certification, upskilling their employees with uniform practices to capitalize on growth in private-labeling products.

Equipment can be critical to close a gap in production, capitalize on a new opportunity, or ensure worker safety. This can include new software, production equipment such as tooling or robotics, or systems to reduce environmental hazards for workers.



F.X. MATT BREWING COMPANY (Utica)

WDI assisted with installation of air filtration units to maintain worker health and safety. Employees are members of **Teamsters Local 294**.

BUTTON DOWN FACTORY (Brooklyn)

Automated cutting equipment has helped this apparel manufacturer improve competitiveness and sustainable business growth. Employees trained on the new equipment have more modern skills that are becoming more necessary in the industry.

F.E. HALE MANUFACTURING COMPANY (Frankfort)

This family-owned custom furniture manufacturer required modern IT infrastructure and production software as it transitions ownership to the third generation, improving quoting of new projects and overall productivity.

MICROMOLD PRODUCTS (Yonkers)

This manufacturer of plastic pipe and fittings upgraded CNC machining equipment for

more complex designs to meet customer demands in industries including semiconductor, food and beverage, and chemical processing. Employees trained on this equipment will have increased opportunities within the company.

MONOFRAX (Falconer)

WDI assisted with redevelopment of the customer website experience and the current online quote, sale, and inventory capabilities. These changes to online sales improved internal processes and is expected to lead to continued growth. Employees are members of the **International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 2105**.

After high-profile cyberattacks, businesses have heard the warnings that all employees need to be trained and accountable to ensure cybersecurity. This has been particularly important for anyone in the supply chain for large original equipment manufacturers or Department of Defense contractors.

SELFLOCK SCREW PRODUCTS COMPANY (Syracuse)

This manufacturer of custom wire harnesses, cable assemblies, and precision machined components, engaged in cybersecurity remediation and developed a comprehensive plan that included training CNC machinists, as even end users can lead to vulnerabilities.

SECTOR MICROWAVE INDUSTRIES (Deer Park)

This manufacturer of radio frequency switches for satellite communications trained all employees, from the shop floor to the c-suite on the new cybersecurity standards issued by the **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)**.

ORIGINAL HERKIMER COUNTY CHEESE COMPANY (Ilion)

A recent security breach led this manufacturer of specialty cheeses to upgrade server hardware and train staff to prevent further cybersecurity issues.

SPAP Forges Community Connections to the Building & Construction Trades

The Statewide Pre-Apprentice Program (SPAP) is a partnership between the NYS Building & Construction Trades Council and WDI, focused on assisting current local apprenticeship readiness programs, and developing new programs. This partnership embodies the union construction industry's outreach to underserved communities, with an emphasis on creating opportunities for women and people of color.

Union Building and Construction Trades Registered Apprenticeship empowers workers with modern skills that lead to careers with family-sustaining wages, comprehensive benefits, and worker protections. SPAP produced a promotional video highlighting women and people of color who are thriving in the trades, with the hope to inspire future workers to know the industry is open to everyone. [To view the video, please click here.](#)

Our partnership held the first Apprenticeship & Workforce Development Training Summit, bringing together workforce specialists, pre-apprentice coordinators, leadership and training directors of affiliate unions, and others for interactive discussions on best practices for building a talent pipeline, the importance of community outreach for successful recruitment, and curriculum elements.

Construction projects including upgrades to road and energy infrastructure, and manufacturing plants for semiconductor and clean energy components will provide a generation of opportunities. As each project breaks ground, the need for skilled tradespeople grows, so now is the time to ensure the pool of future workers is inclusive.

The SPAP has a network of existing partners who are working to meet the future workforce demand:

BUILDNBeyond

in the Hudson Valley increased the participation of women and grew overall enrollment. Graduates selected trades including Bricklayers, Electricians, Laborers, Carpenters and Sheet Metal Workers.

OPPORTUNITIES LONG ISLAND

saw the majority of the graduates gaining direct entry into the **Ornamental Ironworkers Local 580**. The region is primed for growth due to Offshore Wind and other emerging industries.



MULTI-CRAFT APPRENTICESHIP PREPARATION PROGRAM (MAPP)

remains very active in Rochester and Albany. WDI's assisted with Virtual Reality training equipment that provides real skills in a safe environment.

NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN (NEW)

in New York City is working with SPAP to fund a marketing campaign to reach public transit riders with posters and other media to increase enrollment.

PATHWAY TO APPRENTICESHIP

collaborates with the **Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council** and **Syracuse Build**, teaching the nationally recognized **Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3)** from the **North American Building Trades Unions (NABTU)**. WDI assisted with instruction costs, tools, and safety equipment.

CONSTRUCTION SKILLS IN NEW YORK CITY

is partnering with SPAP to provide 250 "Starter Kits" with items for both the classroom and hands-on portion of the training. SPAP also helped Construction Skills implement an Emergency Boot Fund.

SISTERS IN THE BROTHERHOOD

Our support continues for Sisters in the Brotherhood, a program of the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters that provides women with direct-entry opportunities to enter the Carpenters apprenticeship. Funding support ensures participants have the tools, personal protective equipment, and transportation solutions for participants.



Cannabis Workforce Initiative: Cultivating a Workforce for a Growing Industry

New York's adult-use cannabis industry has the potential for as many as 50,000 jobs, and countless more in ancillary industries. There is activity among potential business owners and workers, as well as community-based organizations and educational institutions that will train the workforce to ensure this sector thrives.

WDI has built internal capacity and developed partnerships to ensure workers are able to capitalize on this opportunity. We launched the **Cannabis Workforce Initiative (CWI)**, a partnership between WDI and the **New York School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University (Cornell ILR)**, with a mission to promote and support social equity in the adult-use cannabis market by providing quality workforce development and legal education.

CWI's work prioritizes diversity, equity, and quality jobs through skills training, entrepreneurship services, workforce supports, legal education for employees and employers, and the development of high-road career pathways. We are guided by the CWI Advisory Committee, comprised of stakeholders from racial justice and community development organizations, industry employers, labor unions, and higher education to provide invaluable insight and expertise that strengthens our work in the sector.

The centerpiece of CWI's portfolio is our [online platform](#) designed to introduce participants to the variety of careers in the sector. The Career Exploration & Worker Rights program directly addresses the need



for industry-specific and no-cost training that can help those looking to enter work in the regulated cannabis market make informed decisions and deliver value to employers on day one. The program is free to all users and can be found at [CannabisWorkforce.org](#), with training programs integrated into [Future Skills Exchange](#).

We have also sponsored and co-hosted cannabis industry events that reach communities most harmed by cannabis prohibition. We have utilized our network of community-based organizations (CBOs), and cultivated new relationships, to ensure we are serving social equity individuals and being responsive to their needs.

Our concentrated outreach to current and potential cannabis licensees has increased our expertise about workforce needs and enabled us to connect them to talented workforce pipelines. We have leveraged our considerable experience in grant funding and program development to support skills training, hiring, and recruitment.

Some jobs require specialized training that is unique from other industries, but there are many with foundational and technical skills found in other dynamic sectors, including: agriculture, manufacturing, life sciences, construction and maintenance, retail, and hospitality. With vast experience in all of these sectors, we are able to offer expertise to employers and CBOs to build collaborative, high-quality, inclusive workforce programming for this emerging sector.

Course Outline

DURATION: 15 HOURS

- | | |
|---|--|
| ❖ Cannabis Plant Science | ❖ Retail Exploration |
| ❖ Cannabis Industry Overview | ❖ Ancillary Industries Exploration |
| ❖ Sales Training: Characterizing Products | ❖ History of Cannabis |
| ❖ Health and Safety | ❖ Worker Rights |
| ❖ Compliance: Seed-to-Sale | ❖ Employer Responsibilities |
| ❖ Cultivation Exploration | ❖ LPAs and Unions |
| ❖ Extraction Exploration | ❖ Cannabis in the Workplace—Drug Testing |
| ❖ Manufacturing Exploration | |

“It feels so wonderful to have the help of the subsidy, as a working single parent who wants to work to provide for my child. I’m so grateful, I can work my scheduled hours and my child is in a safe and healthy before care program.”

-WDI CHILD CARE SUBSIDY RECIPIENT



Child Care: A Crucial Support for Working Families

Access to affordable, quality child care is essential to ensure the societal and economic stability of individual working families, and our state as a whole.

WDI’s Child Care Subsidy Facilitated Enrollment Program (CCSFEP) provides child care subsidies to working families earning up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in eight counties across New York State—Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, and Onondaga. After years of advocacy, CCSFEP was expanded this year to include Suffolk and Nassau counties. WDI has officially launched our program for working families in Suffolk County and is awaiting approval from Nassau County. Updates will be posted on our website.

The average cost of child care for a family with two children is over \$30,000 per year, forcing families to make hard economic decisions. Since March 2020, a disproportionate number of women, and specifically women of color, have left the workforce and been less likely to return than their male co-workers. Likewise, under-resourced workers face financial barriers, forcing the difficult cost-benefit analysis of whether to work at all. With employers seeing quality jobs going unfilled, it is in the interest of all New Yorkers to reduce the burden of the cost of child care.

The CCSFEP provides direct financial support in the form of income-based subsidies that bring down the cost to a more affordable rate. The average CCSFEP family reduces its payment by about 75%. When families spend less on child care, they can better afford housing and transportation, pay student loans and other bills, and make healthier choices for increased nutrition for everyone in the household.

This pilot program administered by WDI in the eight upstate counties, and the Consortium for Worker Education in New York City, has been life changing for thousands of families. Traditionally these programs covered families with incomes above Department of Social Services limits, but who were still struggling with the cost of child care. In 2022, New York State increased the income standard for all counties to 300% of FPL. The CCSFEP programs also increased to 300% FPL, allowing WDI to serve significantly more families than in the past.



In the past year, the CCSFEP program served and supported 1,557 families, totaling 2,034 children. In turn, these families supported 868 child care businesses, including many woman-owned small businesses.

FSX: Unlocking the Mystery of Training Opportunities

New York State's economy needs workers who are ready for today's jobs but can also easily prepare for the future by acquiring the skills employers will be seeking in the coming decade. Yet the education and training ecosystem can be overwhelming to navigate. With the emerging importance of credentials, microcredentials, and stackable credentials, learners need easy tools to review critical information and identify potential return on investment relevant to their careers.

Future Skills Exchange (FSX) seeks to close this gap creating a single platform to collect information about a wide range of education and training opportunities. FSX is a free, easy-to-navigate, online marketplace developed by WDI that allows New Yorkers to search, compare, and connect directly to courses, credentials, and apprenticeship opportunities best suited to them. These include union apprenticeships, and options from other higher education providers, BOCES, online training providers, and bootcamps.

In partnership with the **NYS Building and Construction Trades Council**, WDI has developed the **Union Building and Construction Trades Apprenticeship Portal**. This targeted marketplace will allow candidates to learn about and connect with all union apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs across New York State.

This will be followed by a designated marketplace populated with quality training for the emerging Cannabis industry as new programs come online.

FSX was developed by WDI in partnership with **Innovate+Educate**. We continue to grow our network of partners, including a key partnership with the **New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP)**.



Features for Learners

- ★ System focus is on ease of navigation for learners.
- ★ Search pathways by keywords, skills, location, virtual vs. in-person, price, and other filters.
- ★ Connects learners directly to details and registration, reducing navigation steps.

Features for Education/Training Providers

- ★ FSX provides data analytics to track site visits and direct clickthroughs to institution's website.
- ★ Provides additional marketing opportunity to a wide and diverse pool of potential students.

Features for Union Apprenticeship Programs

- ★ Connect programs with the next generation of union workforce using technology that reaches them where they're most active and engaged.
- ★ Expanded marketing outreach to candidates who may have no familiarity with the benefits of union apprenticeship opportunities.



Energy and Climate State Policies Creating Opportunities

New York has emerged as a national leader with bold energy policies creating workforce opportunities. These include ambitious goals for energy production, requiring that 70% of our electricity will come from renewable energy sources by 2030; as well as requiring all new school buses purchased to be zero-emission by 2027 and to achieve 100% zero-emission fleets by 2035.

Partnerships among unions, businesses, government, and developers are necessary to ensure we have the skilled workforce to meet these goals. As the sector grows, it is critical that diversity, equity, and inclusion remain top of mind. WDI is partnering with stakeholders across the industry to ensure these jobs offer equitable access, good pay, modern training, and advancement opportunities.

While action is already taking place toward these goals, policies continue to evolve. We are monitoring the implications for workers in public transit electrification, electric grid, energy storage, school bus electrification, electric vehicles, charging stations, green hydrogen, building decarbonization, offshore wind and solar energy.

WDI follows the progress of Climate Action Council meetings to track implementation plans and workforce implications of the *Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)*. We also participate in policy discussions on diversity and equity issues in clean energy, representing disadvantaged communities in forums organized by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

Our most expansive recent work was a workforce needs assessment of school bus electrification, that included interviews with stakeholders, to understand how it will impact the workforce that manufactures, operates, and maintains school buses. Using the lessons from other states and early adopters in New York, we have identified opportunities and challenges for school districts, transportation contractors, and affiliated labor unions as they transition fleets.

The research has highlighted a need for proactive training on three fundamental areas:

- **Zero-emission bus familiarization:** Training for drivers and technicians on the fundamentals of zero-emission vehicles, including component identification, differences between different technologies (battery electric, fuel cells, hybrid, etc.), operation of these technologies, energy storage systems, diagnostics, and maintenance.
- **High-voltage awareness and safety training:** Bus mechanics trained in conventional operating systems need specialized training with knowledge, skills, and safety practices specific to the use of high-voltage equipment.

- **Electric school bus charging training:** Training to understand charging options, battery management systems and charger-to-bus communication, including orientation to existing and future charging technologies, charger maintenance and safety considerations, and up-front planning needed for electric bus facilities.



In addition, the research further explores jobs, skills, training, and credentials needed in the electrification process.

WDI is working with our partners in organized labor, government, education, and manufacturing to ensure that all of these changes are accomplished with just transition in mind. There are opportunities for lifelong careers, provided we are delivering high-quality training for in-demand occupations with strong labor standards, and ensuring equitable access to the jobs that will power our future.

Developing the Next Generation of the Workforce

Accelerated retirements have resulted in expertise gaps while quality jobs are going unfilled in many industries. There are many reasons, but often lack of awareness of these great careers is high on the list.

WDI has worked with employers that are investing in leadership and management training, advancing individuals from entry-level jobs in frontline production positions to supervisory roles. A few examples from this past year include:

NORWICH PHARMACEUTICALS (Chenango County)

This program focused on situational leadership skills and developing a network of internal coaches. This company includes workers represented by **International Chemical Workers Local 251C**.

AKWESASNE MOHAWK CASINO (Franklin County)

Leadership Development Essentials for workers in the hospitality sector.

RAND MACHINE (Chautauqua County)

Leadership training for a new generation of managers at a company serving the energy, aerospace, defense, and transportation industries.

SHELL FAB (Erie County)

Management, leadership, and problem-solving training for emerging leaders at a custom countertop company.

Employers are becoming more engaged in career exposure events, building relationships with educators and students to ensure the future workforce is aware of world-class jobs that are often closer to home than they realize.

CONSTRUCTION CAREER DAYS (Western New York, Rochester/Genesee Valley)
Organizations including WNY **Construction Career Days, Inc.**, **Rochester Careers in Construction, Inc.**, **Builders Exchange of Rochester**, and **Alfred State College** host events to provide practical exposure to the Union Building and Construction Trades for thousands of students.

WPBS-TV (Jefferson County)
This PBS affiliate developed GPS for Success, a career exploration website for students interested in STEAM careers. WDI supported virtual reality equipment to supplement educational media content on the platform and create a hub for VR training.

MINORITY MILLENNIALS (Suffolk County)

WDI supported the creation of videos to increase awareness of careers in manufacturing for this organization that is focused on growing civic engagement and building new generational wealth within minority communities.

CAREER JAM (Capital Region)

With two events in 2022, Career Jam brought together thousands of students with employers from multiple industries for a hands-on, immersive experience. The program inspires and empowers 8th and 9th grade students from all backgrounds and abilities to imagine their future.

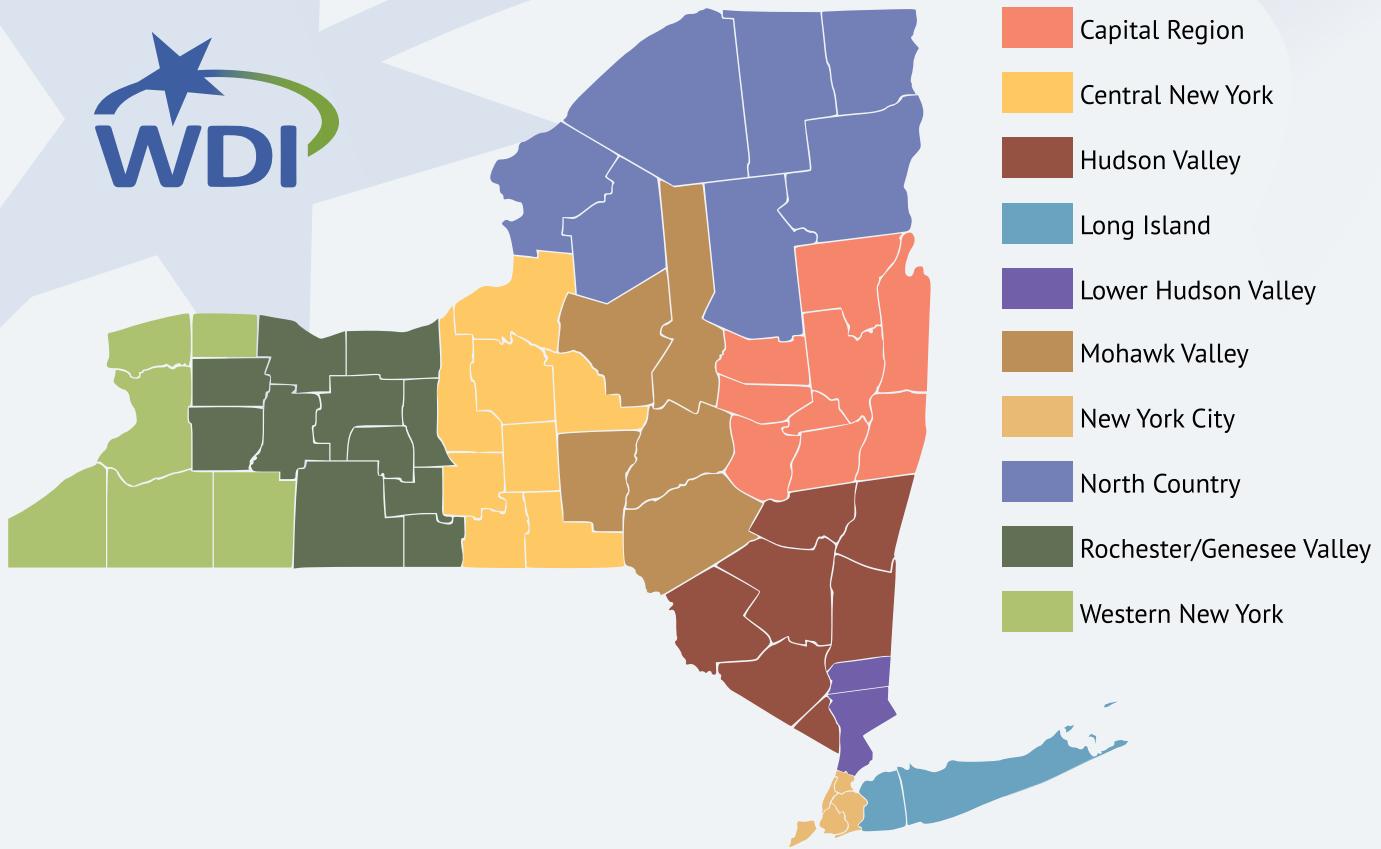
NEBULA ACADEMY (Suffolk County)

This software bootcamp provides individuals from underrepresented backgrounds with training and placement for careers as software engineers, technology salespeople, and computer support technicians, with exceptional placement rates into internships and jobs with excellent wages.

COMPOSITE PROTOTYPING CENTER (Nassau County)

Knowledge of composite materials give a leg up to individuals entering manufacturing careers in aerospace, transportation, and energy. A two-day program for students from Freeport High School offered an introduction to composites and overall manufacturing, and eligibility for a college credit upon completion.





WDI's Regional Directors and specialized program staff engage with over 1,000 unions, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions each year. Our staff are sought-after subject matter experts, serving as hosts and guests on panels, and frequently providing insight in media on current workforce topics.

Collectively, we participate and serve on more than 200 boards, councils, and committees, including:

- ★ Area Labor Federations and Central Labor Councils
- ★ Workforce Development Boards
- ★ K-12 and Higher Education advisory committees
- ★ Manufacturing and Industrial alliances
- ★ Regional Economic Development Councils
- ★ Non-profit and CBO boards and committees
- ★ Economic Development groups
- ★ Chambers of Commerce
- ★ Neighborhood Alliances
- ★ Community Collaboratives

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