



Workforce Development Institute

2023 Annual Impact Report

*Strengthening
New York's Workforce*

wdiny.org



Workforce Development Institute

2023 Annual Impact Report



Table of Contents

About Us	3
Inclusive Employment	4
Building & Construction Trades	6
Energy & Climate	8
Manufacturing	10
Future Workforce	12
Cannabis Workforce Initiative	14
Child Care Program	16

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. Our work supports our partners from Organized Labor, employers, and education and training organizations to think and act differently regarding hiring, training, and retaining an inclusive and productive workforce. Our priority is to ensure working people have the opportunity to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

We work across many sectors and industries, including with unions in the Building and Construction Trades, private and public sectors, as well as with employers in manufacturing, transportation, healthcare, and nonprofit.

All these industries are facing demographic and market factors that require employers to offer career opportunities that are attractive to modern workers. We cultivate partnerships with those who are offering quality jobs. Those that are most successful have common characteristics, including:

- ★ **Family-sustaining wages** that allow people to go beyond subsistence survival,
- ★ **Family-securing benefits** that protect employees both now, and in the future,
- ★ **Employer-supported training** to develop skills, and earn certifications and credentials,
- ★ Clear pathways for **future career growth**, and
- ★ **Safe and inclusive workplaces.**

Our partners include community-based organizations serving people from all backgrounds, including those from disadvantaged communities and with barriers to employment. We support their work in many ways and serve as a bridge to connect these future workers to career pathways with quality, inclusive employers.

Working families, including those with quality jobs, still face challenges to economic mobility, including the need for affordable, high-quality child care. In 2023, WDI was afforded the opportunity to administer a **Child Care Scholarship** program. This pilot program provides financial support to help cover child care costs for working families, including expanding eligibility for those not covered by existing programs.

Our **Cannabis Workforce Initiative (CWI)** draws on the expertise from **Cornell ILR** and **WDI** to promote and support social equity in the adult-use cannabis market. Our work prioritizes diversity, equity, and quality jobs through training and education, including skills training, entrepreneurship services, workforce support, workers' rights education, and the development of high-road career pathways.

In collaboration with the **New York State Building and Construction Trades Council**, we launched the **Apprenticeship Works NY** platform, which provides trade and local-specific information, to increase applications to union apprenticeships. This partnership also includes our **Statewide Pre-Apprentice Program**, to advance opportunities for individuals from underrepresented populations to gain the skills and experience to qualify for apprenticeships.

Our **Energy and Climate program** is focused on the present and future opportunities for workers as our state works to meet ambitious goals to build clean energy infrastructure and reduce emissions. Our role is to educate and support partners as they train and certify the workforce in the Building and Construction Trades, manufacturing, and beyond. As school districts transition to zero-emission buses, WDI is rolling out **training resources** to demystify battery-electric school buses to prepare 50,000 New Yorkers working in pupil transport.

Our depth of expertise, network of partners, and statewide presence empower us to understand the needs of the modern workforce and drive solutions that remove barriers. As new sectors emerge and create opportunities for workers, we fill gaps not covered by other organizations, with the goal of improving the lives of workers and

Strengthening New York's Workforce.



**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE**

Inclusive Employment for All Workers in New York

WDI is committed to supporting programs that ensure equitable opportunities for the advancement of all individuals, regardless of race, gender identity, disability, veteran status, socioeconomic background, prior justice-involvement, geography, or other factors. We work with partners who are training individuals, and employers who are creating job opportunities for workers from all backgrounds.

Systemic barriers have persisted for individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), reducing economic opportunities and resulting in cycles of generational poverty for many individuals and families. WDI has worked with partners who are trying to end these cycles for the people they serve, including:

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Rochester

This membership organization equips and engages Black workers in their places of employment, their organizations, and their communities. CBTU provides ongoing, holistic support for union members, including training seminars on effective public speaking, mental health, and workplace wellness and burnout.

Environmental Justice Corps Buffalo

This program trains individuals from low-income households in green infrastructure, resulting in certificates including OSHA 10, as well as personal development in leadership and communication. Trainees explore career opportunities with the **Buffalo Sewer Authority's** Green Infrastructure Department, Building and Construction apprenticeships, manufacturing and beyond.

Hospitality Pathways New York City

As one of CWI's early partners, the organization trains people from marginalized communities for the cannabis hospitality industry and overall success in the workplace, including industry terminology, guest first philosophy, teamwork, and problem solving. With a strong network of employer partners, graduates are currently working in the forefront of the industry.

Seasoned Gives Kingston

The founders of this nonprofit, and the network they have built, provide mentorship and support to BIPOC entrepreneurs. This ranges from personal and business coaching, to use of a commercial kitchen to help build a business.



Individuals who have been justice-involved can face limitations as they rebuild their lives and careers. Some of these are barriers imposed by employers who are unwilling, or uncertain of how to offer opportunities. Other challenges are rooted in the lost time due to judicial entanglements that kept individuals away from education and training opportunities. WDI has supported organizations that help people regain what they have lost, including:

914United Inc. Yonkers

The *One Step Ahead Program* helps individuals develop foundational skills for career readiness and prepares them for employment opportunities in marketing, construction, food service, retail, and clerical positions.



Bike New York New York City

Trainees learn the skills to become full-time bike mechanics and are put on track for positions that can include jobs with **Transportation Workers Union Local 100**. Individuals who complete the program also take home their own bike that they personally refurbished.

Tech Valley Hospitality Shuttle Capital Region

This fast-growing business is creating opportunities for returning citizens, as well as recent immigrants, people with disabilities, and military veterans, training them to attain commercial driver's licenses with passenger endorsements.

Above average unemployment rates persist for workers with disabilities regardless of their educational background. The organizations that are most successful in serving individuals with disabilities do so by developing extensive employer relationships, and ensuring their own employees have the tools they need for success.

Oneida-Lewis ARC Marcy

This integrated worksite ensures all employees have the skills necessary to operate equipment in this packaging and assembly environment. This results in opportunities for workers in the ARC's business enterprises and with external employers.

Starbridge Rochester

The organization is working to increase job connections by enhancing online assessments for job seekers to identify skills and career goals, and employer assessments that evaluate their capacity for disability inclusion and provide customized training videos to educate their staff.

Yes She Can Inc. White Plains

The *Transitional Services* program supports young women with Autism Spectrum Disorder or related diagnoses by providing work readiness training, including retail and customer service skills via classes and hands-on experience in YSC's retail store, **Girl Again Boutique**.

Limited English proficiency creates a major barrier to inclusion and advancement in the workplace. In fast-paced environments, miscommunication can lead to inefficiencies or safety issues. Employers who implement English as a Second Language (ESL) training programs or provide materials in employees' native languages can minimize the risk, while opening up more opportunities.

Adults and Children with Learning and Developmental Disabilities, Inc. Bethpage

This organization that serves more than 3,000 people has many employees who do not speak English as their primary language. By building an intermediate English program, they are training workers to enable effective communication that is especially crucial in direct service.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1049 Long Island

The union worked with **Eastern Suffolk BOCES** to develop a contextualized ESL program for an exclusively Spanish-speaking segment of members. For workers who routinely work around high-voltage wires and over active railways, improved communication means improved workplace safety.

Orwashers Bakery Bronx

This manufacturer has a 70% Spanish-speaking workforce. As they modernized technology, including inventory systems, they implemented an ESL program that included written and spoken English. This reduced miscommunications and increased employees' skills on the job.

Advancing the Workforce for Building & Construction Trades

The Union Building and Construction Trades registered apprenticeship programs provide the gold standard of training and career pathways. Apprentices earn while they learn, ensuring they have the skills for a lifelong career without incurring debt.

In the past year, we have supported **96 projects** that have impacted more than **15,000 workers** at all levels of experience, including those who are just starting their apprenticeships, and Journeyworkers who are adding new skills to expand their opportunities on jobsites.



Our partnership with the **NYS Building & Construction Trades Council** is invaluable to our work in this sector. We work together through a broad approach of developing and supporting training programs, holding educational events, and using technology to promote, expand, and diversify apprenticeship programs. Our partnership was recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship as **Apprenticeship Ambassadors**.

Our shared **Statewide Pre-Apprenticeship Program** is focused on assisting current apprenticeship readiness programs and developing new programs to create opportunities for women and people of color. Our support has provided tools and equipment for trainees, expanded marketing, and developed pipelines for future recruiting. We are working with school districts to implement the **Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3)** in high schools to broaden our reach where major projects are on the horizon.

In late 2023, we co-hosted the second annual **Apprenticeship and Workforce Development Training Summit**, bringing together leaders from unions from every region of the state to discuss the future of clean energy jobs, apprenticeship readiness programs, partnerships with workforce pipeline organizations, and worker mental health.

We also launched **Apprenticeship Works NY**, an online platform for individuals to learn more about the trades, the skills needed, and how to start on the path to family-sustaining careers with Building and Construction trades union apprenticeship. This free, easy-to-navigate resource allows New Yorkers to search, compare, and connect directly to individual apprenticeship opportunities best suited for their careers. It is a powerful tool for union apprenticeship programs to reach a broader, more diverse pool of potential learners than traditional marketing.

Apprenticeship is the entry point to a culture of lifelong learning in the Building and Construction Trades. Journeyworkers are consistently participating in training on new technologies, techniques, materials, and safety measures.

In addition, WDI has extensive partnerships with multiple locals of the following trades:

International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers

International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators

International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers

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

United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters

United Brotherhood of Carpenters

United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers, and Allied Workers



Unions are preparing for an influx of projects as we work towards the clean energy goals laid out in the *Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)*. These projects will require new skills as members work on projects in offshore wind, thermal energy networks, building decarbonization, and enhancements of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

IUPAT DC9 New York City

The local's training staff participated in a train-the-trainer program to develop a curriculum for members to learn new skills for application of protective anti-corrosion coatings on the new composite materials used in construction and maintenance of offshore wind farms.

IBEW Multiple locals across the state

Training centers across the state have modernized electric vehicle charging stations to deliver *Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program 5.0 (EVITP)*. Apprentices and Journeyworkers who are EVITP certified will work on commercial and municipal installations as demand will continue to increase for years to come.

IBEW Local 25 Hauppauge & **IBEW Local 3** New York City

As work in the Offshore Wind industry continues to grow, more members require *Global Wind Organisation (GWO)* training and certification. This multifaceted training includes general GWO protocols and safety training, sea survival, Get Up Safe (GUS), and Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET).

LIUNA Multiple locals across the state

Instructors are participating in a train-the-trainer program that will allow them to certify members as Accredited Installers through the *International Ground Source Heat Pump Association*. Certified members will be eligible to perform site preparation work on thermal energy installation projects.

Major infrastructure projects and buildouts of large-scale manufacturing plants for semiconductors and clean energy components are underway, bringing long-term opportunities for multiple trades. Unions are working to meet the challenge of ensuring members have the necessary skills and certifications to work on these sites.

Iron Workers Multiple locals across the state

The union has increased training capacity due to the increasing demand for certified welders. In several locations, this has meant adding new welding booths for training and testing, as well as increasing the number of members with Department of Transportation welding certificates.

Roofers Multiple locals across the state

Roofing materials continue to evolve on large-scale projects, including a shift toward more environmentally sustainable materials. This requires union members to stay current on safe and efficient installation techniques.

UA Local 81 Syracuse

As the region simultaneously prepares for semiconductor and green hydrogen plants, members of the local are learning new skills for polyfusion welding of materials used in these sectors, as well as thermal energy networks.

There is great demand for individuals with Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL) in the public and private sector. At the same time, there are fewer options for training and the cost is continuing to rise. Union programs are building their internal capacity to train members to meet the demand, with no out of pocket costs to learners.

IUOE Local 158 Glenmont

The union ensures member safety in controlled environments using simulator technology to train on several different classes of vehicles. In addition to expanding training capacity, this saves thousands of dollars each year on equipment maintenance for their fleet of heavy machinery.

Teamsters Local 294 Albany

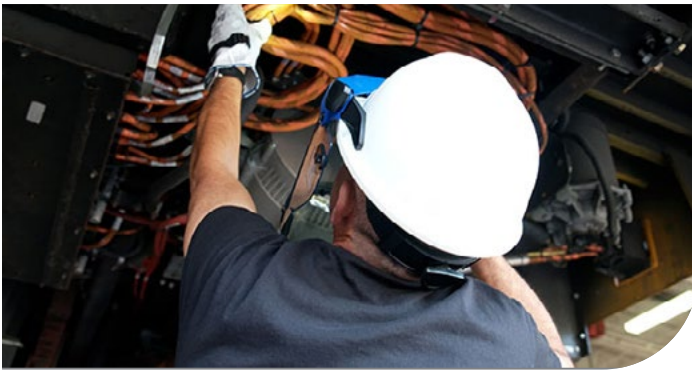
With increased demand for Class B operators, the union added new training offerings for opportunities in construction, material moving, and municipal jobs including snowplow operators.



Energy and Climate Program

Preparing Workers for Opportunities

WDI's Energy and Climate program aims to help New York's workforce be competitive now and ready for what is next. We look into the future while also responding to urgent requests from partners meeting the challenges of today.



Landmark legislation like the **Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)** and the **Environmental Bond Act** requires significant numbers of unionized trades workers to accelerate the new energy economy, while ensuring diversity and equity are top priorities. At the confluence of these ambitious aims is where WDI programs and partners are at their best.

The transition to emission-free school buses is underway and will directly impact **50,000 New Yorkers** who work in pupil transportation. Our 2022 report **Workforce Strategies for Clean School Buses** provides a snapshot of this workforce and technology, and the clear demand for training. This led us to develop **familiarization training** on the basics of battery- electric school buses to prepare driver-operators, bus aides, mechanics, technicians, and dispatchers before the buses reach their lots.

The training will demystify the basics of the technology through engaging content on topics like high-voltage safety, operations and maintenance, and fundamentals of battery-electric motor systems. It includes content developed with our partners at **Blue Bird** and **Livingston Energy**, among others who are fueling the future of pupil transportation.

This training complements other learning offerings from unions, manufacturers, and school districts. An [industry overview](#) was rolled out in late 2023, with more to come in 2024. It will also be shared with our union and workforce pipeline partners to use as a recruitment tool that inspires excitement about this transition to attract the next generation of talent. This includes our partners at **ATU, CSEA, NYSUT, RWDSU, TWU, and UFCW**.

The skilled professionals of the **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)** are integral to the build out of charging infrastructure needed for electric buses and other vehicles. WDI is partnering with IBEW to ensure their training centers have the latest charging technology and training curriculum to upskill members on standards like the **Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP)**, a credential developed by an industry-wide coalition.

As New York continues to develop offshore wind sites, **Global Wind Organisation (GWO)** certification will continue to grow in demand for installation workers, technicians and vessel operators working on the water. These are only a portion of the workforce opportunities of the industry. For a considerable portion of the supply chain, proximity to the ocean is not a prerequisite. WDI is working with **NYSERDA**, manufacturers, community-based organizations, and workforce developers to promote these opportunities, including in regions that do not border the ocean.

Manufacturers are interested in learning more about supply chain opportunities for wind and other energy economy sectors but are often preoccupied with existing workforce challenges. In our work we help them understand that rarely, if ever, does a company need to completely overhaul the production and technical skills of their workforce to pursue renewable energy. Instead, they need collaborative strategies that prioritize job quality — in the form of family-sustaining wages, benefits, worker voice, and advancement opportunities — and establish a culture of continuous skill building.

Workforce development sits at the nexus of a triple challenge of New York's new energy economy: mitigating the effects of the climate crisis, creating jobs and economic benefits, and advancing restorative justice and equality. At the state, regional, and local levels, a growing coalition of partners is making meaningful progress on all fronts. WDI is proud to be a part of this momentum and looks forward to continuing to make progress in the coming year.



Landmark legislation requires significant numbers of unionized trades workers to **accelerate the new energy economy**, while ensuring diversity and equity are top priorities.

Manufacturing Proudly Made by New Yorkers

New York's manufacturing sector continues to grow, with thousands of jobs added so far this decade. Large-scale semiconductor and clean energy manufacturing projects will create thousands more, both in direct roles and with businesses in the supply chain. WDI is working with small- and medium-size manufacturers currently serving other industries to help them identify opportunities in the supply chain. It is important to continue our efforts to ensure New Yorkers have the creative and technical skills to capitalize on these opportunities.

Modern manufacturing facilities require a host of skills to operate effectively and safely. These include hands-on, software, and analytical skills on the production floor, in engineering, and in maintenance. As new equipment comes online and constantly evolves, training for future workers and the incumbent workforce must keep pace.

Arconic Massena

With several generations of complex equipment in the plant, there is greater demand for workers to be skilled in troubleshooting Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC). Maintenance personnel, who are members of **United Steelworkers Local 420**, are taking multiple levels of PLC training to be prepared as business in the aerospace and electric vehicles market continues to grow.

Clinton Community College Plattsburgh

The college's Institute for Advanced Manufacturing is helping fill a critical area of need in the region by offering a no-cost, comprehensive welding training program that sets up graduates to enter the workforce at higher wages than entry-level manufacturing positions.

Corning Tropol Fairport

Due to rapid growth of hundreds of employees in the past few years, including many with limited experience, the company has developed fundamental optics manufacturing training. This includes training on cleaning and inspection of precision optics to Department of Defense standards. This has allowed the company to hire from a broader range of candidates and develop talent internally.

Hudson Valley Textile Project Troy

The development of a wool scouring facility will help hundreds of businesses in the farm-to-fashion fiber chain including farmers, dyers, millers, and designers, reduce costs and create jobs. This shortens the supply chain as previously the nearest facility was in South Carolina.

Nutrition Bar Confectioners Cato

The implementation of a new **Wind4** Industry 4.0 cloud-based manufacturing system resulted in training in data analytics and sensor technology. Adding these skills makes employees better equipped to work in modern, data-driven manufacturing environments.



Perry's Ice Cream Akron

A new extrusion line for novelty products includes advanced technology and robotics not previously used onsite. This required the development of a robust 14 module training program that will ensure employees, including members of the **United Auto Workers Local 55**, continue to have the most modern skills to keep the line running.

Red Iron Works West Babylon

The company undergoing facility upgrades and adding new CNC equipment along with the requisite training for employees will ensure they are ready to take on projects in offshore wind and other industries. Installation work for large-scale projects is done by **Ironworkers Locals 361 and 40** and **Ornamental Ironworkers Local 580**.

Sumitomo Rubber Tonawanda

With a higher-than-normal retirement rate, skilled maintenance workers are in high demand. Technicians, who are members of **United Steelworkers Local 135**, participated in Mechatronics training to learn troubleshooting and repair of the broad range of equipment in the facility, creating opportunities for advancement.

Employers in every sector of the workforce must ensure they are opening their doors to all possible workers. This can mean looking at job descriptions, work processes, and recruiting methods to ensure they are as inclusive as possible. It can also mean creating training programs that help individuals with barriers to employment get a foot in the door.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Brooklyn

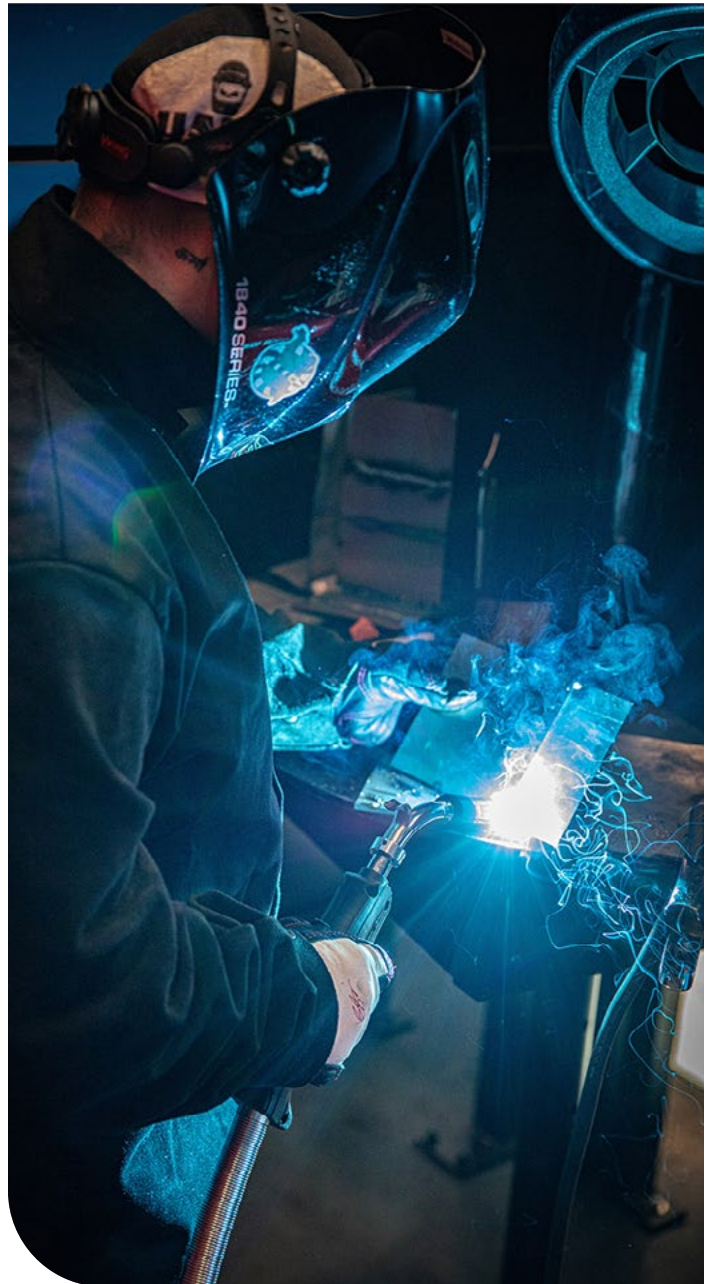
The organization's CNC machining training serves unemployed job seekers and workers at Yard companies from low-income communities, or who have been historically underrepresented in high-skill manufacturing roles. The curriculum includes software tutorials, digital design, and additive manufacturing, as well as the opportunity to gain Mastercam credentials, potentially receiving up to four certifications that enhance opportunities for CNC employment.

Fala Technologies Kingston

The company leads the **STEM & Technical Exploring Pathways (STEPS)** program, which incorporates onsite training, and coursework at **SUNY Ulster** to prepare trainees for careers in manufacturing. STEPS works with a network of supportive service providers to serve individuals often overlooked by traditional career development programs, including workers with disabilities, people receiving public assistance or from low-income families, and English language learners.

Vigneri Chocolate Rochester

The company added state-of-the-art equipment and cross-trained workers, many of whom are recently-arrived immigrants from Ukraine and Afghanistan. While this has increased production, the company is proud that they have also supported people as they sought opportunities aligned with their previous roles in their home countries.



Future Workforce Preparing the Next Generation

Pathways to careers have many entry points, whether someone is entering the workforce for the first time or changing careers. WDI works with partners to provide career exposure opportunities to spark interest, skill development to ensure trainees have the prerequisites to gain opportunities, wraparound services to ensure early success, and leadership development skills to help them grow their careers.

Union jobs offer proven pathways to family-sustaining wages, family-securing benefits, and a voice on the job. There are opportunities in every corner of the state, but often potential applicants are unsure of how to get started. Our partners are working to light the path for future workers, including:

James R. Cook Labor Agency Utica

This non-profit community services arm of the **Central NY Labor Council** is working with **Mohawk Valley Latino Association** to build awareness of high-quality union jobs in the building trades, healthcare, manufacturing, and public sector.

Western NY Area Labor Federation Buffalo

This partnership with **Erie 1 BOCES EDGE Academy**, is exposing high school students to union careers with weekly seminars led by workers from a wide range of backgrounds. The sessions will demystify jobs, include hands-on activities related to each career area, and culminate with a career fair at the end of the school year.

The union Building and Construction trades feature prominently in both programs. In addition to career exploration, many people who wish to enter a Building Trades apprenticeship program need prerequisite training to meet the high skill requirements.

WDI partners with Apprenticeship Readiness Programs, including:

- Construction Skills
- Helmets to Hardhats
- Hudson Valley Build N Beyond
- Multi-Craft Apprenticeship Preparation Program
- Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW)
- Opportunities Long Island
- Pathways to Apprenticeship
- Sisters in the Brotherhood
- Syracuse Build
- Westchester P2A
- Western New York Pre-Apprenticeship

[Visit NYS Building & Construction Trades Council to learn more.](#)





Our network of partners includes SUNY community colleges, K-12 school districts, BOCES, and community-based workforce development organizations that are training the future workforce for in-demand careers.

Alden Central School District Alden

The student-run enterprise **Bulldog Manufacturing** provides hands-on experience for students that goes beyond career exposure. It results in real workplace skills in the areas of manufacturing (including welding and machine operating), design, marketing, management, and business operations that align with career opportunities available in the local community.

Center for Employment Opportunities Buffalo

Building on the success of CEO's partnership with **Laborer's Local 210**, we are working in collaboration to develop relationships with additional unions and Apprenticeship Readiness Programs, to offer pathways into the Building Trades apprenticeship for individuals who have been justice-involved.

Danfoss Silicon Power Marcy

In partnership with the **Expertise Project**, the company developed the *Bridge Builder Recruiting Initiative*, allowing individuals to participate in a virtual reality tour of their cleanroom production environment to better understand the opportunities in advanced manufacturing.

New Settlement Bronx

The **Young Adult Opportunity Initiative** and **YouthBuild** programs serve out-of-school, disconnected youth, providing career exploration and training, as well as supportive services for emotional and social needs. The curriculum includes communication skills, conflict resolution, and financial literacy, along with job readiness training that includes hands-on workshops and role-playing. Students are engaged after program completion to ensure they have the support they need.

Urban League of Long Island Long Island

This summer manufacturing exploration program put students onsite with four manufacturers, as well as spending two weeks working with the **SUNY Stony Brook University Robotics Team** to build technical and developmental skills.

Yonkers Partners in Education Yonkers

The *Robotics Major* program provides a well-rounded education in robotics, combining theoretical concepts with practical experience to prepare them for careers in technology. YPIE serves a diverse population that is over 80% Hispanic, Black, and Asian, providing technical and foundational skills, as well as connections to a network of employers in healthcare, agriculture, green energy, and manufacturing.

Cannabis Workforce Initiative

Building Skills & Making Connections

The New York State Cannabis Workforce Initiative (CWI) draws on the expertise from Cornell ILR and WDI to promote and support social equity in the adult-use cannabis market by providing quality workforce development and legal education.

We are building multi-dimensional partnerships that generate high-road, high-quality careers with family-sustaining wages, worker empowerment, upward mobility, continuing education, and corporate responsibility leading to the building of generational wealth.

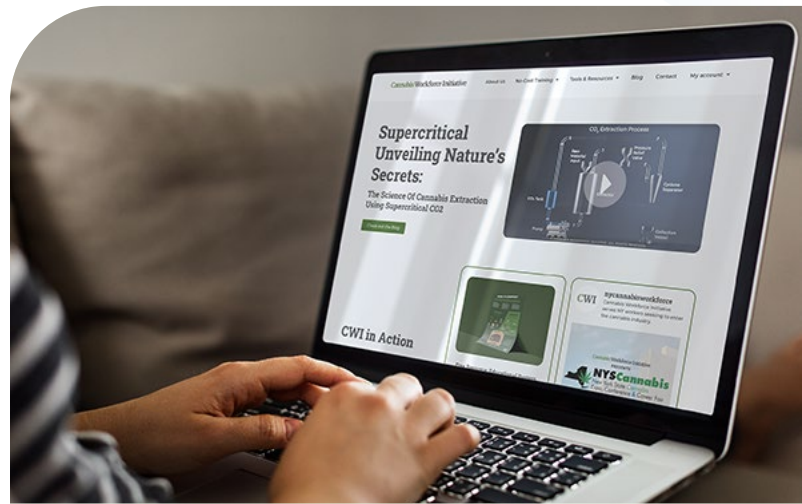


Cannabis Workforce Initiative

Some cannabis jobs require additional specialized training that is unique from other industries, but there are many with foundational and technical skills found in other sectors, such as agriculture, manufacturing, life sciences, construction and maintenance, retail, and hospitality.

We have continued to develop and deliver the **Cannabis Career Exploration and Worker Rights Certificate** program. This 10-class, 15-hour pre-employment program is rooted in our expertise in the cannabis industry and shaped by our ongoing interactions and conversations with community groups and workforce development professionals.

To date, we have had more than **4,900 individuals** interact with our online learning modules and multimedia content offerings. We are continuing to increase our course offerings to include Intermediate programming, scaling up workforce skill development as the industry grows.



CWI Intermediate Course Offerings

Cannabis Plant Science and Terpenology

Sensory workshops to identify different cannabis strains, leading to differences in taste, smell, and beneficial therapies.

Working in a Dispensary

Tools & techniques for sales specialists with an emphasis on identifying industry trends with consumer demands.

Craft Cultivation

Ultra low-cost farming methods allow individuals with limited financial resources to enter the cannabis cultivation industry without significant upfront investments.

Beyond the Bud

Exploring the cannabis supply chain from producing, processing, distributing, and selling cannabis and cannabis-related products from the cultivation stage to the end consumers.



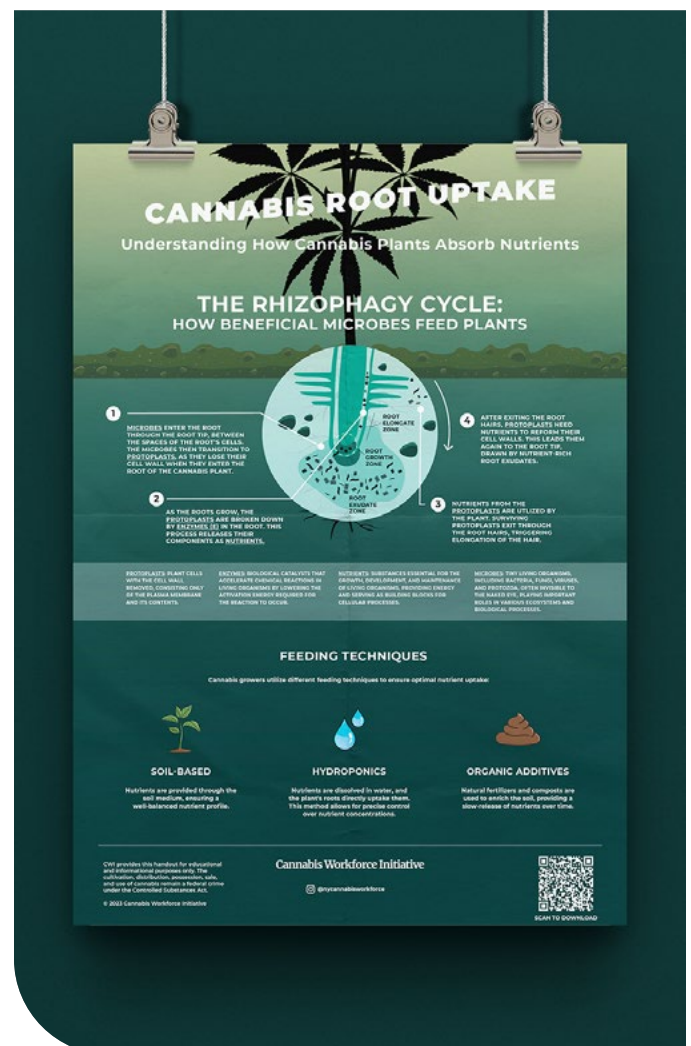
We are also launching **“CannaCoach”** an online platform that connects job seekers to current jobs in the industry based on their skills and interests.

The CannaCoach platform will:

- Provide Job Seekers with the resources necessary to enter and advance their career in the cannabis industry.
- Provide New York cannabis industry employers with the resources they need to startup, operate and hire qualified job seekers in compliance with NY cannabis law.
- Connect qualified job seekers with employers in the cannabis industry.
- Provide Administrators with an environment to manage resource content for Job Seekers and Employers.
- Provide Administrators with insightful analysis detailing the real time performance and efficacy of the CannaCoach program.

In addition to a regularly updated informational blog, CWI has created materials including posters, videos, and visual animations for plant science, industry processes, and manufacturing concepts.

These thoroughly researched and visually appealing materials are available on our website, cannabisworkforce.org, freely democratizing them for use by educators and learners in libraries and classrooms.



Child Care

A Crucial Support for Working Families

The need for affordable, high-quality child care is one of the most common challenges we hear from our partners and their members. 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.

WDI successfully piloted the **Child Care Subsidy Facilitated Enrollment Program (CCSFEP)** for nearly two decades, helping thousands of families in our service areas stretch their household budgets as they grew their careers. In the most recent 18 months of service to our applicants, **96% were women**, from both single and two parent households. This allowed women to keep working or return to work during the COVID period where women were forced out of the workforce at record levels.

We recently expanded our role to perform outreach, educating and recruiting working families eligible for county child care subsidies. This pilot program not only helps increase utilization of Child Care Block grant funds available at the county level, but also allows working parents to apply for child care funding at worksites, other community-based venues, and off-hours through our union partner network. WDI's staff helps facilitate the application process, saving applicants from having to take time away from work to pursue this workforce support.

In 2023, WDI was afforded the opportunity to administer the **Child Care Scholarship** program, providing financial support for working families to help cover child care costs. This pilot program expands eligibility for working families that are not covered by existing programs.

This includes households where the applicants are working, or in an education or training program (such as a pre-apprenticeship or short-term training program) for at least 10 hours per week. The Scholarship is paid directly to child care providers at an average of \$1,000 per month per qualifying child.

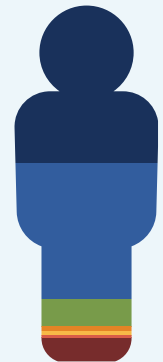
WDI's new service area covers all regions of the state outside of New York City, where a similar program is administered by our partners at the **Consortium for Worker Education**. When families spend less on child care, they can better afford housing and transportation, pay student loans and other bills, and make healthier choices for increased nutrition for everyone in the household. In addition to supporting working families, this program supports child care centers, many of which are woman-owned small businesses.

We know that investing in high-quality child care is an investment in our future. The families we serve are better equipped to pursue their career goals knowing their children are secure in safe and nurturing environments.

CCSFEP:
October 2022 to
August 2023

**2,008
Families
Served**

By Race / Ethnicity



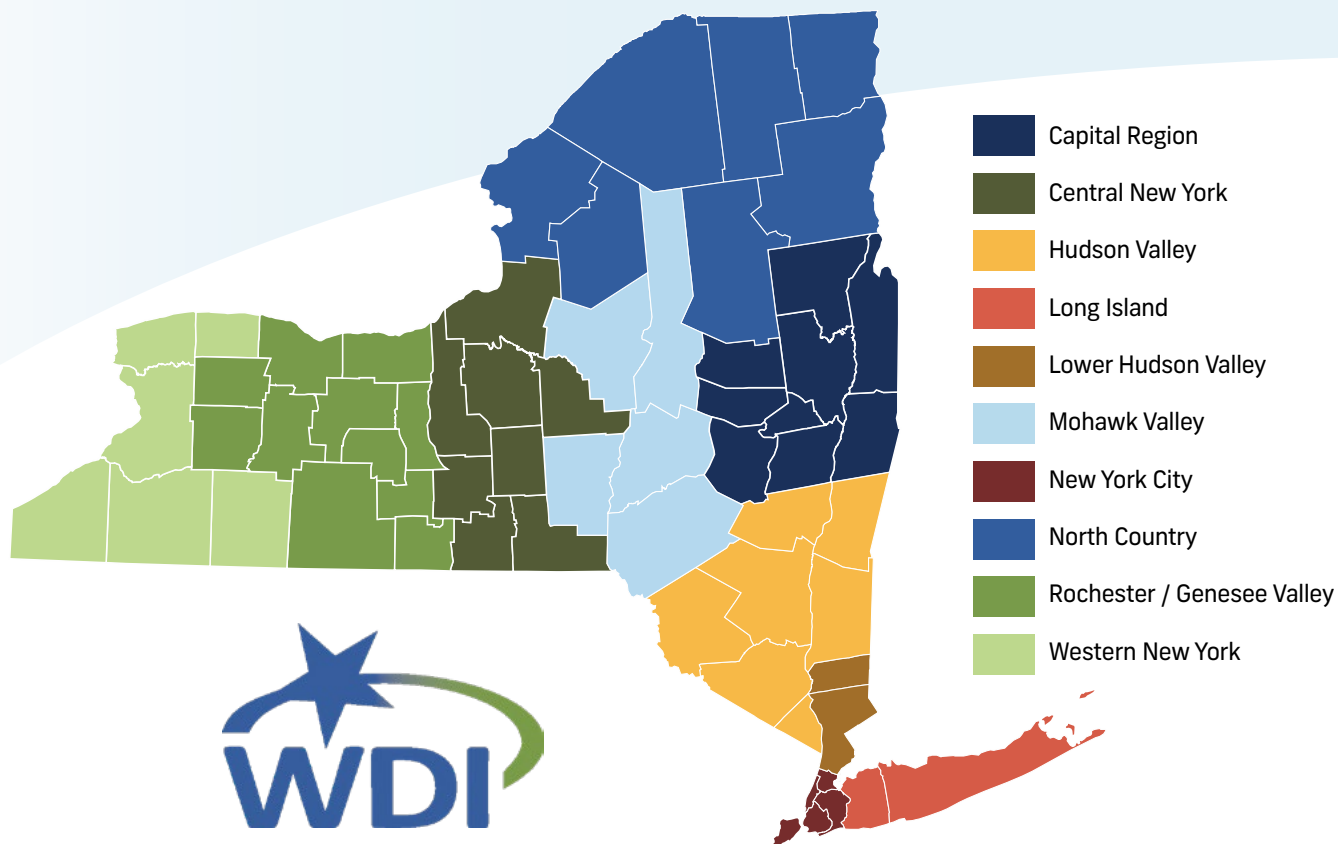
43.0%	Black / African American
38.7%	White
8.6%	Latino / Hispanic
1.1%	Asian / Pacific Islander
1.1%	Afro-Caribbean
0.5%	Other
7.0%	Two or more

“

This program gives us both the opportunity to work full-time, meaningful jobs while knowing our children are in a **safe, loving and healthy environment.**

– Child Care Scholarship Recipient









WDI engages with over 1,000 unions, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions each year. 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
- ★ NYS Apprenticeship Programs
- ★ Non-Profit and CBO Boards and Committees
- ★ Economic Development Groups
- ★ Chambers of Commerce
- ★ Community Collaboratives

Workforce Development Institute

96 South Swan Street • Albany, NY 12210
518.463.2141 • wdiny.org

Amy Desjardins, Executive Director

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