

# Recommendations to Encourage Registered Apprenticeship – Community-Based Organization Partnerships



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and  
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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a strategy that offers significant promise for both addressing the need of American industry for a highly skilled workforce and offering workers a pathway to the middle class. The model pairs paid on-the-job learning with related classroom instruction in a career field with a nationally recognized credential. RA offers job seekers immediate employment opportunities that usually pay higher wages and offer continued career growth. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are important groups that offer training to prepare individuals that lack adequate skills for apprenticeships as well as support them during their apprenticeships. CBOs offer a range of classes and services including math and language skills, job readiness skills, boot camps, job shadowing, peer groups, and providing childcare, transportation, uniforms and tools.

A multitude of RA programs are firmly anchored in their communities and team with CBOs and other organizations to recruit from the diverse populations of their communities. In an effort to better support these partnerships, the United States (U.S.) Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Apprenticeship (OA) tasked the Secretary of Labor’s Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA) to explore issues and challenges related to RA/CBO engagement. The federal advisory committee is composed of representatives from industry, labor, and the public.

The purpose of this paper is to better understand the key ingredients in successful RA/CBO partnerships, the key challenges preventing partnerships, and to document feedback and recommendations from stakeholders about how DOL might better foster effective RA/CBO engagement and bring existing successful partnerships to scale.

The DOL OA convened a series of listening sessions in early 2012 to explore the opportunities and challenges of RA/CBO partnerships and sought input on the following questions:

- What are the challenges in engaging RA sponsors and CBOs in effective partnerships?
- Can you identify best practices to highlight? What makes them successful?
- What are the common elements to successful collaborations?
- What are your specific recommendations to promote better engagement?

This paper presents findings on the common successes and challenges in RA/CBO partnerships, four best practices case studies, and recommendations to DOL on how to better foster RA/CBO partnerships.

### **Best Practices**

The RA/CBO partnerships that are highlighted have many common elements of a successful collaboration. This whitepaper describes the following four exemplary partnerships that are

helping under-represented communities gain access to RA and simultaneously helping RA reach a pool of local talent.

- Minnesota Ex-Offender, Precision Manufacturing Program
- Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.
- Building Futures
- Georgia Trade-Up

## Challenges

During the three listening sessions, RA sponsor and CBO participants were asked to share challenges and barriers they have encountered in establishing or expanding partnerships. In many cases, both RA and CBO stakeholders identified the same, or related challenges and barriers. Many of the challenges identified by participants are not limited to RA/CBO partnerships, but rather reflect common challenges that arise in any number of workforce development partnership efforts. Participants did not believe that the challenges raised are insurmountable. Listening session conversation yielded a large number of examples of partnerships that have successfully negotiated and overcome common challenges; these successful models offer proven strategies and opportunities for adoption and replication as seen in the Best Practices Section of this paper.

### Overarching/Universal Challenges

- “Environmental” challenges – the recession impact.
- Lack of awareness of one another’s missions, programs, priorities, operations, and requirements and limitations.
- Insufficient outreach and communication among CBO and RA stakeholders.
- The need for more diverse and more clearly-articulated partnerships.
- Lack of alignment between worker supply and employer demand.
- Lack of well-articulated and well-communicated “K to gray” career pathway opportunities that include CBO programming, RA, and other avenues for career development and lifelong career advancement.
- Need for multi-source, but also sustained and sustainable funding models that support and help expand partnerships among CBOs and RA sponsors.
- Need to enhance opportunities to expose CBO customers, including high school students, under-served populations, and others, to pre-apprenticeship and RA opportunities.
- Language, high school diploma/equivalency, and skill proficiency barriers.

### CBO Perspectives

- CBO customer perception issues and lack of leveraging CBOs as critical “inputs” to RA recruitment, preparation, and retention efforts.

- Lack of understanding around how to “penetrate” and partner with RA systems and programs in a value-added and complementary manner.
- Education, training, and related costs for pre-apprentices and apprentices.
- Geographical and physical proximity challenges.

#### **RA Sponsor Perspectives**

- Persistent stigmas and perception on RA occupations and careers.
- Lack of alignment between CBO program focus/output and RA sponsors’ talent needs.
- Need for additional supportive and “wrap-around” services for CBO customers in RA programs.

### **Recommendations**

RA has a proud legacy of providing a pathway to good jobs and career growth. To build on and honor that track record of success, we offer policy and programmatic recommendations to ensure all American workers are able to access and succeed in RA.

- Encourage Meaningful RA/CBO Partnerships.
- Ensure Under-represented Groups are prepared for Apprenticeship.
- Ensure Under-represented Groups succeed in Apprenticeship.

## II. INTRODUCTION

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a strategy that offers significant promise for both addressing the need of American industry for a highly skilled workforce and offering workers a pathway to the middle class. The model pairs paid on-the-job learning with related technical classroom instruction in a career field with a nationally recognized credential. RA offers job seekers immediate employment opportunities that usually pay higher wages and offer continued career growth. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are important groups that offer training to prepare individuals that lack adequate skills for apprenticeships as well as support them during their apprenticeships. CBOs offer a range of classes and services including math and language skills, job readiness skills, boot camps, job shadowing, peer groups, and providing childcare, transportation, uniforms and tools.

The United States (U.S.) Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Apprenticeship (OA) tasked the Secretary of Labor’s Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA) to explore issues and challenges related to RA/CBO engagement. Per this direction, the ACA, a federal advisory committee composed of representatives from industry, labor and the public, developed this paper to get a better understanding of the relationships between RA programs and CBOs. The paper has several purposes: understand the key ingredients in successful RA/CBO partnerships; showcase the value of RA/CBO partnership through best practice examples; share the key challenges that prevent partnerships from taking root throughout the country; and to document feedback and recommendations by stakeholders from industry, RA, and CBOs about how the DOL might better foster effective RA/CBO engagement and bring existing successful partnerships to scale.

Good jobs—jobs that offer family-supporting wages, employer-sponsored benefits, and a career pathway—increasingly demand formal education or training. Employers’ need for workers with greater skills has increased as technological advancements across nearly all industries increase the need for skilled workers. Economic and labor force projections show that great demand for skilled trades workers in the construction, manufacturing and utility trades will emerge in the near future due to retirements, growing investment in green industries and infrastructure, and economic rebound.

The U. S. public primary and secondary education systems have struggled to prepare workers for the demands of the labor market, especially in the elimination of career and technical education classes, leaving many trapped in low-wage jobs with limited upward mobility.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harvard Graduate School of Education, *Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, February 2011.

[http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news\\_events/features/2011/Pathways\\_to\\_Prosperty\\_Feb2011.pdf](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news_events/features/2011/Pathways_to_Prosperty_Feb2011.pdf)

RA is a strategy that offers significant promise for both addressing America's skills shortage and offering under-represented workers a pathway to economic mobility. RA participants receive paid on-the-job learning with related technical instruction and upon completion a nationally industry-recognized credential, immediate employment opportunities, and opportunity for lifelong career growth. RA is a treasured American pathway to the middle class, providing an entry to sustainable careers for those who can gain access. Even in the recent recession, RA provides opportunity, with 147,000 new apprentices registered nationally in 2012.

The majority of these new apprentices are in the Building and Construction Trades Apprenticeships. The construction industry and its workforce make up a vital piece of the U.S. economy. The wages and opportunities that the construction industry provides have long supported the middle class in the U.S. The Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship is a portable, marketable credential valued by employers throughout the U.S.

Despite its important role in preparing American workers, many communities are under-represented in RA.<sup>2</sup> While some RA programs have made great strides in recruiting under-represented populations, others have relied more heavily on traditional networks for recruiting and so do not reflect the diversity within the workforce in their area.<sup>3</sup>

CBOs have offered pre-apprenticeship programs to bridge this gap, helping to give participants the hard and soft skills needed to gain admission into RA or related occupational advancement, as well as providing valuable technical assistance to their RA partners. The services provided at a CBO are outreach and recruitment, case management, career counseling, remedial academic instruction and tutoring, basic vocational instruction, and referral to and placement in advanced education and training and work. Pre-apprenticeship programs provide exposure to a wide variety of high skill, high wage, blue collar careers, enabling workers from under-represented communities to gain exposure to the demands and standards of the many different industries, learn the educational and vocational skills needed for entry, and address any personal challenges that might prevent them from successfully completing a RA program. CBOs also provide RA staff and employers with training for apprentices, such as retention, mentoring, racial and gender harassment prevention curriculum, cultural competency, and others. The most successful partnerships are those that are built on trust and mutual collaboration. Examples of these partnerships are provided in the case study section of this paper.

Through DOL programs such as Women in Apprenticeship and Non-Traditional Occupations (WANTO), YouthBuild and Job Corps, pre-apprenticeship program models have been

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<sup>2</sup> Deirdre A. Royster, *Race and the Invisible Hand: How White Networks Exclude Black Men from Blue-Collar Jobs*, University of California Press, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Moir, S., Thompson, M., and Kelleher, C., *Unfinished Business: Building Equality for Women in the Construction Trades*. A Research Report from the Labor Resource Center, College of Public and Community Service, and the Center for Women in Politics & Public Policy, McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, 2011. [http://works.bepress.com/susan\\_moir/3/](http://works.bepress.com/susan_moir/3/)

successfully tested and proven. Low-income youth, veterans, minorities, women, and other under-represented populations served under these programs have shown tremendous progress, succeed in RA programs at unprecedented rates, and show significant income gains. The average hourly wage of participants who completed a RA program in FY 2012 is \$24.38.<sup>4</sup> A recent study commissioned by the DOL found that over a career of 36 years, participants who completed the RA program had average earnings gains of nearly a quarter million dollars (\$240,037, increasing to \$301,533 with employer benefits added) compared to nonparticipants.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, recent research from the Aspen Institute titled, “A Strong Foundation: Key Capacities of Construction Pre-apprenticeship Programs,” provides solid analysis that shows the value that CBOs bring to RA, industry and the communities they serve (see: <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/strong-foundation-key-capacities-construction-pre-apprenticeship-programs>).

Outside of these federally-supported programs, though, RA/CBO partnerships have been varied, taking root in some communities and not in others. In cases where RA programs partner closely with CBO pre-apprenticeship programs, RA programs report seeing value in having access to a pre-screened and qualified pool of applicants. They may offer feedback on curricula, provide technical training, facilitate placement of program graduates into registered apprenticeships, or financial support. But in many other cases, partnerships between RA programs and CBOs have been fraught with challenges and uncertainties rather than trust and mutual collaboration.

To better understand the key challenges and recommendations for improvement, DOL OA convened a series of listening sessions in early 2012 to explore the opportunities and challenges of RA/CBO partnerships as a strategy to improve access to and success in apprenticeships for under-represented populations. Input was received on the following questions:

- What are the challenges in engaging RA sponsors and CBOs in effective partnerships?
- Can you identify some best practices that we can highlight? What makes them successful?
- What are the common elements to successful collaborations?
- What are your specific recommendations to promote better engagement?

Based on information exchanged during the ACA workgroup meetings and other data sources, including the listening sessions, the ACA presents four best practice case studies, its findings on the common successes and challenges in RA/CBO partnerships, and recommendations to DOL on how to better foster RA/CBO partnerships.

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<sup>4</sup> RAPIDS FY 2012 cohort.

<sup>5</sup> *An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States*, Debbie Reed, et. al., Mathematica Policy Research, 2012.



### III. BEST PRACTICES

Across the country, RA/CBO partnerships can be laboratories to help better understand the key ingredients of success. In this section, we profile four exemplary partnerships that are helping under-represented communities gain access to RA and simultaneously helping RA reach a pool of local talent.

#### *Minnesota Ex-Offender, Precision Manufacturing Program*

**Mission:** Located in the Minneapolis Metro Area, the Precision Manufacturing Program targets incarcerated young men and women for careers in manufacturing. The partnership grew out of recognition of the community's need for structured education, skills training and soft skills opportunities for young people transitioning to employment after release from prison, among whom unemployment in the Minneapolis metro area has skyrocketed. The program began with a two-year, DOL Youth Offender grant, but has been sustained by the partnership among HIRED, a local workforce development organization, Hennepin Technical College, the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) and the Minnesota Department of Corrections. The program is now funded by the Minnesota Department of Corrections.

**Curriculum:** The pre-apprenticeship program, offered at three prison sites, is extremely rigorous, using the NIMS training and certification system. Participants take 300 hours of Manufacturing Fundamentals, offered six days a week. Each class lasts approximately six months. Instruction includes Blueprint Reading, Shop Math, use of Hand Measuring Tools, and Shop Safety (i.e., Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)). Participants complete their pre-apprenticeship training while in incarcerated and earn six to seven NIMS credentials. They earn up to 14 college credits from Hennepin Technical College through distance learning. The college transcripts do not disclose that credits were earned while in incarcerated, thus increasing the employability opportunities upon release. In addition, the Minnesota Department of Corrections industry program, MINNCOR Industries, provides skills training and, in a few cases, post-release employment.

**Supportive Services:** Essential to the program is the soft skills training and supportive and transitional services provided by HIRED and Life-Skills-Power of People Training, two area CBOs. Each class of participants received one-on-one counseling, both pre- and post-release, mentorship, interview strategies, and referrals to job opportunities. Participants also received job readiness instruction emphasizing soft skills such as showing up to work on time and proper work attire, and received transitional support and services, including job referrals, after their release from prison.

**Outcomes:** In the two years that the program has existed there have been seven graduating classes at three sites with 115 participants (105 men and 10 women). Of those, 76 men graduated with 39 employed; and six women graduated with four employed. Distance learning

college courses for the incarcerated, the wrap around and transitional services, and the ongoing mentorship were essential to the program's success. These services helped to reduce the recidivism rates, and increased the likelihood for success after the program. Another critical component was the outreach to employers through an established employer network and the college contacts.

**Elements of Partnership:** The strong partnership among HIRED, Hennepin Technical College, NIMS and the Minnesota Department of Corrections has made the program successful. Each partner is committed to the program and works to make sure that participants have successful placements and outcomes. The college has developed an elaborate network of employer connections which has been a key factor to securing interviews and placements for program participants. The program has faced funding challenges including a decrease in state funding and struggles to get new grants.

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#### ***Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.***

**Mission:** Located in Portland, OR, the Oregon Tradeswomen Inc. (OTI) reduces poverty for women by educating them about careers in the building, construction, technical and mechanical trades, and assisting them to move into training and employment. Because they are the highest-paid of blue collar jobs, OTI focuses on the trades such as, electrical, plumbing, carpenters, operating engineers, mechanics, etc. OTI helps women achieve true self-sufficiency by unraveling the confusing and intimidating system of RA programs and entry into the skilled trades, targeting low-income, unemployed, women returning to work from welfare, women coming out of incarceration, female veterans, and single mothers. OTI also has programs serving middle and high school girls, as well as incumbent tradeswomen seeking leadership development.

**Curriculum:** OTI's pre-apprenticeship program is a certificate program approved by the Oregon State Apprenticeship and Training Council and the Employer/Apprenticeship consortium of Construction Apprenticeship Workforce Solutions, and recognized by other RA programs in Oregon and southwest Washington. The free seven-week curriculum helps women prepare for careers in the trades and learn about apprenticeships, and gain paid-on-the-job learning to become a skilled trades worker. Participants undergo 30 hours of hands-on construction experience at non-profit building or remodeling sites; explore topics such as safety, construction

culture, apprenticeship, communication; learn basic trade's math and measurement; and try out the tools of various trades through visits to apprenticeship training centers and hands-on activities led by trade's people.

**Supportive Services:** The program offers a comprehensive array of services. Participants access career planning, via one-on-one appointments with a job developer and use of OTI's career planning tool, to identify career goals and next steps. OTI offers help with boots, tools, childcare, transportation, and other ready-to-work needs. Their mentoring and retention support includes regular follow-up calls from a career counselor, ability for graduates to meet one-on-one to problem-solve on workplace issues, and hosting a monthly mentoring gathering to connect new workers with experienced tradeswomen.

**Outcomes:** OTI's participants have achieved tremendous success. Last year the average wage for graduates was \$13.50 an hour, significantly higher than Oregon's current minimum wage of \$8.50 an hour. About 1/3 of placements are in RA programs. The rest are in a wide variety of blue-collar fields such as construction helper, drivers, hazardous waste technician, manufacturing technician, municipal utility worker, recycler, warehouse worker, weatherization, and welder. Since its start in 2004, OTI has had 655 pre-apprenticeship program graduates. In 2011, OTI graduated 116 women with 82 achieving trade's employment including 36 in RA, 15 in a variety of construction helper positions that will lead to RA over time, 12 weatherization technicians, and many other blue-collar fields.

**Elements of Partnership:** OTI's successful partnership with RA programs, both union and open shop, comes from a number of factors. OTI has several staff that comes from the trades, and, having participated in an apprenticeship, have a deep knowledge about these career choices. OTI fosters mutual trust through regular meetings with RA, and being accountable to RA guidance. RA staff serves on OTI's Advisory Committee and Board of Directors, providing advice and feedback that has helped OTI develop their training and make placements. RAs have made significant contributions to OTI, which have been structured to fit into the RA business model, such as short workshops for program participants as well as financial contributions as sponsors of the annual Women in Trades Career Fair. Not every placement works out for the OTI graduate, employer or RA program, but the basis of trust that has been established means that issues are addressed together, thus strengthening the partnership.

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### ***Building Futures***

**Mission:** Building Futures was started in 2007 with the Rhode Island Building Trades and partners to increase the number of registered apprentices on construction projects, create more

job opportunities and to address a future shortage of skilled labor throughout the state of Rhode Island. The programs target low-income and under-represented communities, including the unemployed, minorities, women, high school drop-outs, Veterans, homeless, and ex-offenders, with 65 percent of participants unemployed and 50 percent receiving public benefits.

**Curriculum:** Building Futures' pre-apprenticeship program includes an extensive assessment phase, and a five-week hands-on customized training program. Building Futures is located in a 10,000 square foot building where participants build a section of highway and take it down as part of the training. The program uses portions of the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, teaches financial literacy, construction math and offers academic tutoring and a GED program. Twelve construction trades accept graduates of the program, many through direct entry.

**Supportive Services:** Ongoing support services ensure a successful transition into and retention in an apprenticeship. Building Futures has offices in a community center and has formal and informal partnerships with other organizations to help overcome barriers to employment such as child care, transportation, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), financial literacy and other supportive services. Building Futures also runs a GED program, an on-line algebra class and academic tutoring and provides the majority of supportive services in-house, as well as hardship assistance to participants and graduates. An additional assessment and referral system with other CBOs has ensured wrap-around support is provided to all participants as needed.

**Outcomes:** Twelve construction trades accept graduates, many through direct entry agreements. Since its start in 2007, Building Futures has 147 graduates of the pre-apprenticeship program with 112 placed into RA slots. Out of the placements, there is a 93 percent retention rate through the first year of the apprenticeship.

**Elements of Partnership:** Because Building Futures staff had themselves gone through RA programs they could rely on established relationships with labor, and were able to bolster those relationships through interviews with RA training directors to learn what they were looking for in apprentice candidates. Building Futures has established both formal MOUs and informal partnerships with RA, but the hallmark of both has been the development of communication, respect, and trust. Clarity of purpose, transparency, and accountability have been important elements to help each partner know their roles and responsibilities to achieve results.

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***Georgia Trade-Up***

**Mission:** Georgia Trade-Up, founded by the North Georgia Building and Construction Trades Council and Stand-Up, a local CBO, aims to provide accessible training in critical work skills to low-wealth Atlanta communities and create a workforce pipeline that aligns training output with

market demand. The program targets emerging industries such as transit oriented development, large scale commercial retrofits for energy conservation, and housing rehabilitation, and its participants include a range of under-represented groups such as the long-term unemployed, minorities, women, high school drop-outs, Veterans, and ex-offenders.

**Curriculum:** Trade-Up is a 12-week pre-apprenticeship program through which participants earn nationally-recognized certifications through the AFL-CIO Multi-Craft Core Curriculum. Classes such as construction math are offered to build capacity and enhance performance while OSHA 10 and CPR make participants ‘work ready’ upon graduation. Trade-Up equips all graduates with boots, tools, and safety gear.

**Supportive Services:** Community partners provide initial screening, soft skills training, and remedial academics, and students are provided a stipend with increased pay as they demonstrate commitment and performance. A key part of the program is preparing participants for the real world requirements of work, including an emphasis on timeliness, proper workplace conduct, and appropriate dress—often difficult adjustments to an industry that requires apprentices to be ready to work as early as 6:30 a.m. with frequently changing job sites. A fitness instructor gets participants in shape for strenuous work and a nutritionist demonstrates how to pack an appropriate lunch for a construction site—healthy foods and water needed to get through the day. Participants must be drug free and are given random drug tests at the beginning of the program as well as towards graduation. They also go through an FBI check so there is full disclosure about an individual’s history, with assistance provided to correct and expunge information where appropriate. Another key aspect is exposure to each of the construction trades. Students spend up to three days at each of the participating RA programs to help match talents and interests with a specific occupation. Instruction and coaching are provided to prepare for entrance exams and interviews. Trade-Up follows the progress of its graduates for up to one-year and will provide remedial education and other support services as needed.

**Outcomes:** Each 12-week program has 20 participants. There have been five cohorts totaling 104 students since inception with 50 percent placement in RA, including eight women and six Veterans. The remaining 50 percent have been placed in other jobs. For each cohort there are 300-350 applicants. For students that cannot be placed as apprentices, other paths include placement with residential contractors; preparation for construction management through a partnership with Atlanta Tech and Georgia Piedmont College; and construction contracting.

**Elements of Partnership:** Georgia Stand-Up is located in a building where many labor and community organizations rent space, where staff has been able to get to know each other just by sharing the elevator or passing in the hall. Stand-Up’s strong reputation and regular meetings with the Building and Construction Trades Council (BCTC) helped pave the way for working together. When the need arose for new workers doing rehabilitation of community houses,

BCTC chose to partner with Stand-Up to develop a pipeline of new workers. Challenges have included the difficulty of using local hiring agreements to generate good jobs at middle class wages.

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## IV. CHALLENGES

During the three listening sessions, RA sponsors and CBO participants were asked first to share challenges and barriers they have encountered in establishing or expanding mutually-beneficial partnerships. In many cases, both RA and CBO stakeholders identified the same, or related, challenges and barriers; in other cases stakeholder groups presented specific challenges and barriers. It is important to note that many of the challenges identified by participants are certainly not limited to RA/CBO partnerships, but rather reflect common challenges that may arise in any number of workforce development partnership efforts. In addition, it should be stressed that participants did not feel that the challenges raised are monolithic or insurmountable. Listening session conversations yielded a large number of examples of partnerships that have successfully negotiated and overcome common challenges; these successful models offer proven strategies and opportunities for adoption and replication. Please see Section II, Best Practices, for a selection of promising practices.

### Overarching/Universal Challenges

#### *1. “Environmental” challenges – the Recession impact:*

RA sponsors, particularly those representing industry sectors that have been very hard-hit by the economic downturn (e.g., construction/building trades), noted the fundamental challenge of not having enough employment opportunities to accommodate the number of interested and available workers, including CBO customers. Until the economic recovery picks up pace, this is a barrier that is not easily-addressed. However, listening session participants noted that dialogue between CBOs and other partners, RA sponsors and other employer partners, and the owners of construction projects, can help overcome supply and demand mismatches.

#### *2. Lack of awareness of one another’s missions, programs, priorities, operations, and requirements and limitations:*

Both RA and CBO participants frequently cited that partnership and collaboration are difficult unless there is a shared understanding of one another’s programs, requirements, funding, and activities. By actively working to build a shared understanding of how one another’s programs operate, RA and CBO stakeholders can identify opportunities for synergy and align their efforts for maximum and mutual benefit.

#### *3. Insufficient outreach and communication among CBO and RA stakeholders:*

Closely connected to the second challenge (above) participants expressed that a lack of ongoing communication and outreach among RA sponsors and CBOs can inhibit the development and growth of successful partnerships. Outreach and communication is of course critical to building mutual understanding of the partners’ programs and needs, and is also essential to creating



pathways for CBO customers to enter RA programs and complete them successfully. Participants also noted that outreach and communication efforts must be strategic, intentional, and sustained over the long term.

*4. The need for more diverse and more clearly-articulated partnerships:*

Participants who have developed successful RA/CBO partnerships raised several elements that appear fundamental to their success and noted that when these elements are absent, challenges to effective collaboration arise.

- Collaborations are broad-based and diverse, typically organized on a consortium model that engages the full array of education and workforce training partners.
- Partnerships are often regional, rather than local, in scope, enabling connections among shared interests and needs and the leveraging and alignment of a larger pool of resources.
- Partnerships often feature an intermediary – a relatively neutral entity that acts as a “bridge” to coordinate, foster communication, and broker connections among partners as illustrated in some of the examples in the “Best Practices” section of this paper.
- Partnerships have clear written agreements that outline the specific roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments of all involved partners. Examples of agreements are found in the Appendix.

*5. Lack of alignment between worker supply and employer demand:*

Both RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders raised the challenges that arise when the skill sets and aptitudes of the workforce supply, in this case often the customers of CBO programs, do not align with RA sponsors’ demand-side workforce and skill needs. CBO stakeholders voiced the need for a better understanding of the skills and experience RA sponsors seek in apprentice candidates.

*6. Lack of well-articulated and well-communicated “K to gray” career pathway opportunities that include CBO programming, RA, and other avenues for career development and lifelong career advancement:*

Both RA sponsor and CBO stakeholders felt that a major barrier is the lack of linkages among various training- and career-focused programs (for example, career and technical education programs) that, when aligned and articulated, can better move individuals through increasing levels of education and training and into employment. RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders are also interested in better articulating the path from RA to college credit and college degrees, a major area of focus for the ACA.

*7. The need for multi-source, but also sustained and sustainable funding models that support and help expand partnerships among CBOs and RA sponsors:*

Both RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders noted how difficult it can be to develop and grow sustained partnerships when funding to support collaborative efforts is often, and increasingly,



limited, varying, and cyclical. While stakeholders recognize the need to “get creative” in terms of identifying and utilizing all available resources (financial and otherwise), a persistent challenge is the inability to rely on steady funding to support collaborative efforts over time. CBO and RA listening session participants noted that accessing flexible grant funding, state or local “set-aside” funding, or state general funds can be a solution.

***8. Need to enhance opportunities to expose CBO customers, including high school students, under-served populations, and others, to pre-apprenticeship and RA opportunities:***

Both RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders expressed that the lack of exposure individuals have to the opportunities offered through pre-apprenticeship and RA programs is a real barrier. Where RA sponsors and CBOs have been able to collaborate to expose young people and under-served populations to these opportunities – through school and CBO outreach activities, job/training site tours, internships, job shadowing experiences, and the like – recruitment and pipeline development have been enhanced.

***9. Language, high school diploma/equivalency, and skill proficiency barriers among potential pre-apprentices and apprentices:***

RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders are clear in their commitment to engaging “non-traditional,” minority, and under-represented populations in their programs. These populations, however, often face barriers such as limited English proficiency, lack of requisite math and reading skills, and lack of achievement of high school diplomas or equivalent credentials. Both RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders recognize the need to partner more closely – and engage additional relevant partners – to help address common barriers and build “bridges” into RA for under-represented populations.

## **CBO Perspectives**

***1. CBO customer base perception issues and lack of leveraging CBOs as critical “inputs” to RA recruitment, preparation, and retention efforts:***

CBO stakeholders shared their concern that RA sponsors may immediately assume that CBO customer pools lack the requisite English language proficiency, education, preparation, and/or skill attainment base to successfully enter and complete RA programs, and therefore may not actively recruit from these talent pools. In fact, CBO representatives are very focused on preparing their job seeker and worker customers for participation in RA programs. Ongoing dialogue between RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders can ensure that CBOs’ skill development and career preparation efforts are aligned with the needs of RA sponsors.

***2. Lack of understanding around how to “penetrate” and partner with RA systems and programs in a value-added and complementary manner:***

Many CBO stakeholders expressed confusion around the “how” of best engaging with the RA system. This barrier is amplified for CBOs that are attempting to engage with multiple RA

programs at once, as apprentice selection standards and requirements vary significantly across industries and occupations. From a more logistical perspective, some CBOs also expressed a concern about the timing “mismatch” between when CBOs graduate participants from preparatory programs and when RA programs are able to enroll new apprentices.

### *3. Education, training, and related costs for pre-apprentices and apprentices:*

Identifying and obtaining diverse and well-blended resources to support the cost of pre-apprentices’ and apprentices’ education, on-the-job learning, and related expenses can be a significant challenge. CBOs are often the most “strapped” in terms of their resources, yet they are often simultaneously the most frequently called-upon to provide an incredibly diverse array of services both broadly and equitably. CBO participants in the listening sessions noted the particular difficulty of raising funding for pre-apprenticeship programs.

### *4. Geographical and physical proximity challenges:*

Several CBO stakeholders noted that a challenge, particularly in rural areas, is the physical distance between CBOs’ operating areas and available RA program opportunities. Some CBOs also noted a relative lack of diversity in the kinds of RA programs in their areas; for example, a preponderance of building or electrical trades options, but a lack of other options. This challenge can be overcome through the use of distance-learning delivery for related instruction, combined with more “place-based” on-the-job learning.

## **RA Sponsor Perspectives**

### *1. Persistent stigmas and perception challenges around RA occupations and careers:*

RA sponsors shared that despite significant efforts to educate partners and the public about the diversity of apprenticeable occupations and RA-based career pathways, there remains a perception that RA-supported occupations and careers are “dirty” jobs. There is a lack of awareness about the diversity of industries in which RA offers career opportunities, including healthcare, information technology, and energy. These misperceptions, many RA sponsors feel, impede efforts to introduce broader populations to pre-apprenticeship and RA opportunities.

### *2. Lack of alignment between CBO program focus/output and RA sponsors’ quantitative and qualitative talent needs:*

A challenge highlighted by RA sponsors is the mismatch between the workforce supply being produced by CBOs and other partners and the talent needs of employers and industry. This mismatch is both quantitative and qualitative, meaning that the challenge is one of both numbers of workers – too many or too few, relative to demand – and the readiness and competency level of workers. RA sponsors voiced the need for more standardized pre-apprenticeship programs and enhanced assessment and screening of RA candidates. Enhancing alignment between workforce supply, readiness, and competency and the talent needs of RA programs can be achieved by increasing regular communication among RA sponsors and CBO stakeholders and

focusing on developing and sustaining comprehensive industry partnerships. The Pre-Apprenticeship Quality Framework can be an excellent guideline for setting up a partnership.

*3. Potential need for additional supportive and “wrap-around” services for CBO customers in RA programs:*

RA sponsor participants noted that CBO customers participating in RA programs may need additional services and support in order to be retained and successfully complete. Such services may include ESL support, child care or transportation assistance, mentoring by RA program completers (particularly for under-represented populations), and/or other supports.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

RA has a proud legacy of providing a pathway to good jobs and career growth. To build on and honor that track record of success, we offer policy and programmatic recommendations to ensure American workers of all backgrounds are able to access and succeed in RA.

### Encourage Meaningful RA/CBO Partnerships

- Foster the replication and adoption of best practices in RA/CBO partnerships through means such as webinars, toolkits, informational flyers, action clinics, and staff development sessions.
- Provide technical assistance both to potential CBOs seeking to partner with RA, and to RA programs seeking to improve their performance with under-represented groups.
- Promote RA/CBO partnerships and apprenticeship engagement elements for all federal workforce development grants funded through the DOL that include preparing or retaining workers in those occupations that are apprenticeable.
- The DOL should develop partnerships and memoranda of understanding,<sup>6</sup> with other Federal agencies, such as Federal Highway, the General Services Administration, and the Departments of Energy and Defense, to foster and encourage the use of RA and RA/CBO partnerships.<sup>7</sup>
- On large federal construction projects, DOL may, upon request of stakeholders from RA, Labor, CBO, education, employers and government, facilitate the establishment of local advisory committees.<sup>8</sup> Such committees would not take over authority from RA or collective bargaining agreements, but would advise the project on the recruitment and retention of under-represented populations, and would provide advice and assistance to RA/CBO partnerships and to pre-apprenticeship programs who seek to have their program graduates become registered apprentices on the project.

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<sup>6</sup> Swanstrom, Todd. *The High Road to Greater Inclusion in the Construction Industry: Problems and Prospects*. St. Louis: Anne E. Casey Foundation, 2009.

[http://www.aecf.org/news/fes/mar2009/pdf/Discussion\\_Paper\\_Construction\\_2-09.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/news/fes/mar2009/pdf/Discussion_Paper_Construction_2-09.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Legal Momentum website, “Federal Policies Adopted More Than Thirty Years Ago Have Failed to Reduce Significantly Women’s Exclusion From the Construction Trades,” 2009 <http://www.legalmomentum.org/our-work/women-at-work/resources-and-publications/2009-report-failed-federal.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Nakkoul, Nancy and Sugerma, Lauren for the Great Lakes Tradeswomen Alliance, “Drafting the Blueprint: A Planning Guide to Achieving Workforce Diversity and Equity in Construction,” Created under DOL WANTO grant E-9-4-4-0090, available from Chicago Women in Trades, 2009; and, Kalev, A, Dobbin, F., and Kelly, E., “Best Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies,” AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW, 2006, VOL. 71 (August: 589–617)

[http://scholar.harvard.edu/dobbin/files/2006\\_asr\\_kalev.pdf](http://scholar.harvard.edu/dobbin/files/2006_asr_kalev.pdf)

- Establish consistent collecting and reporting of data across the nation which will provide the supporting proof for where best practices in RA/CBO partnerships are working, and allow comparison and accountability measures. Disseminate relevant research derived from such data (such as the return on investment study) and studies of best practices, in order to enhance best practice replication.

### **Ensure Under-represented Groups are prepared for Apprenticeship**

- Encourage pre-apprenticeship programs to meet the ‘Quality Pre-Apprenticeship’ definition and framework outlined in Training and Employment Notice (TEN), “Defining a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Tools and Resources.” Local and state WIBs should use the TEN for evaluation of pre-apprenticeship programs’ eligibility for inclusion as eligible training providers.
- Encourage RA programs to work with pre-apprenticeship programs that meet the ‘Quality Pre-Apprenticeship’ definition and framework, assisting them with curriculum development, providing training, monitoring the adherence to the Quality Framework, and assist CBOs in developing pre-apprenticeship graduation requirements in accordance with local apprenticeship entry standards under which graduates could receive direct or facilitated entry into apprenticeship, if they otherwise meet apprenticeship entry requirements.
- Develop a specific TEN/Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) for WIA and One-Stop Centers that encourages them to recognize pre-apprenticeship programs as valued Eligible Training Providers and gives them specific direction around referring under-represented populations for pre-apprenticeship training and then RA.<sup>9</sup> Align WIA performance measures for pre-apprenticeship/RA that are flexible enough to reasonably account for the reality of construction apprenticeship entrance processes and employment, but rigorous enough to promote accountability among workforce service providers.
- Facilitate the access to RA for those limited-English speakers who have skills related to apprenticeable occupations by developing contextualized pre-apprenticeship ESL programs.
- Continue the federal workforce development programs that support access for under-represented women and youth such as WANTO, YouthBuild, and Job Corps, and develop a program similar to WANTO that is aimed at gaps in apprenticeship access for minority adults.

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<sup>9</sup> Ariane Hegewisch, Helen Luyri, *The Workforce Investment Act and Women’s Progress: Does WIA Funded Training Reinforce Sex Segregation in the Labor Market and the Gender Wage Gap?* Washington, D.C.: Institute For Women’s Policy Research <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/the-workforce-investment-act-and-women2019s-progress>, 2009.

## Ensure Under-represented Groups Succeed in Apprenticeship

- Provide technical assistance to employers of apprentices to help them implement best practices in training, support, retention, and advancement of apprentices from under-represented populations on their job sites.
- DOL should develop partnerships and memoranda of understanding with other Federal agencies, such as the Federal Highway Administration, the General Services Administration, and the Departments of Energy and Defense, to foster the technical assistance outlined above to employers of apprentices on Federal projects.
- Provide services, in partnership with CBOs, to increase apprentices' success in RA, such as academic tutoring, case management, mentoring, and career counseling.

## VI. LIST OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

**CBA:** Community Benefits Agreement is an agreement involving a community coalition including community, labor, environmental and faith-based organizations and a public or private real estate developer that requires the developer to provide specific amenities and/or mitigations to the local community or neighborhood. In exchange, the community groups agree to publicly support the project, or at least not oppose it.

**CBO:** Community-Based Organization.

**DOL:** U.S. Department of Labor.

**ETA:** Employment and Training Administration.

**OA:** Office of Apprenticeship, the office designated by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration to administer the National Apprenticeship System.

**AJC:** American Jobs Centers are designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof. Established under the Workforce Investment Act, the centers offer training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services. Customers can visit a center in person or connect to the center's information through PC or kiosk remote access.

**RA:** Registered Apprenticeship is a formal employment relationship designed to promote skill training and on-the-job learning. The National Apprenticeship Act of 1937 (NAA) established the foundation for developing and expanding the nation's skilled workforce through Registered Apprenticeship programs and standards for safeguarding the welfare of apprentices. Often referred to as the Fitzgerald Act, the NAA created a comprehensive system of partnerships among business, labor, education, and government that has shaped skill training through Registered Apprenticeship. Basic components of Registered Apprenticeship include on-the-job ("hands-on") learning, related instruction (often in a classroom setting), progressive wage increases as the apprentice advances in skill attainment and a mentor-apprentice relationship. An apprentice who successfully completes a registered program, which usually requires 1 to 5 years, is awarded a Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship. A registered program is one in which employers, or groups of employers, and unions design, organize, manage, and finance apprenticeship programs under the standards developed and registered with OA or a DOL ETA-recognized State Apprenticeship Agency. Employers or groups of employers, and unions also select apprentices who are trained to meet certain predetermined occupational standards. For more information, see the U.S. DOL OA Web site at the following link: <http://www.doleta.gov/oa/>.

**TEGL:** Training and Employment Guidance Letter, a policy directive issued by the DOL Employment and Training Administration to the public workforce system.

**TEN:** Training and Employment Notice, a directive issued by the DOL that reinforces a previous policy.

**WANTO:** Women in Apprenticeship in Non-Traditional Occupations, a grant program to prepare women for a Registered Apprenticeship.

**WIA:** Workforce Investment Act of 1998.



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**VIII. CBO LISTENING SESSION PARTICIPANTS**

**Community-Based Organizations and Other Organizations**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>
David	Alexander	Nine Star Education & Employment Services	Anchorage	AK
Paul	Anselmo	New Century Careers	Pittsburgh	PA
Susan	Baker	Skills Source Group	Vienna	VA
Rhandi	Berth	WRTP Big Step	Milwaukee	WI
		The Edward J. Malloy Initiative for	New York	NY
Nicole	Bertran	Construction Skills		
Patricia	Bready	Quest Management Consulting	St. Louis	MO
Tona	Cravioto	Casa de Maryland	Baltimore	MD
Ron	Danowski	Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership	Milwaukee	WI
Jacob	Denne	Economic Systems, Inc.	Falls Church	VA
Pamela	Downing	Climb Wyoming	Cheyenne	WY
Fernando	Garavito	Casa De Maryland	Baltimore	MD
Eric	Goodie	Houston Area Urban League	Houston	TX
Jeffery	Henderson	PVJOBS	Los Angeles	CA
Javier	Hernandez	Institute ee Progresso Latino	Chicago	IL
Felicia	Hines	Ser Jobs for Progress	Houston	TX
Eileen	Hopkins	YWCA of Greater Cincinnati	Cincinnati	OH
Rocky	Hwaspa	Hard-Hatted Women	Cleveland	OH
Beverly	Jacquez	YWCA of Greater Cincinnati	Cincinnati	OH
Avni	Jamdar	Emerald Cities, San Francisco	San Francisco	CA
Cassandra	Jones	SER Jobs for Progress	Houston	TX
Mark	Kessenich	WRT-Big Step	Milwaukee	WI
George	Kettner	Economic Systems, Inc.	Falls Church	VA
Nicole	Lavan	Non-Traditional Employment for Women	New York	NY
Nestor	Leon	The Workplace	Bridgeport	CT
Kathleen	McKirchy	Community Services Agency	Washington	DC
Robert	Medlock	Consortium For Worker Education	New York	NY
Alison	Motz	Hard-Hatted Women	Cleveland	OH
Khalid	Rashid	Spectrum Resources	Knightdale	NC
Larry	Rebman	Missouri Department of Labor	St. Louis	MO
Susan	Rees	Wider Opportunities for Women	Washington	DC
Sergio	Ruiz	Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation	Las Cruces	NM
Teri	Sandu	Lorraine County Community College	Elyria	OH
Marjorie	Schulman	Non-Traditional Employment for Women	New York	NY
Jeanne	Shaw	Tierra Del Sol Housing Corporation	Las Cruces	NM
Elizabeth	Skidmore	Carpenters Union	Washington	DC
Roni	Spetalnick	Health New Mexico	Santa Fe	NM
Karen	Stran	Mi Casa Resource Center	Denver	CO

Saduf	Syal	Make The Road NY	Brooklyn	NY
Hillary	Vanwynederen	Clues	St. Paul	MN
Meg	Vasey	Trades Women Inc.	Oakland	CA
Jayne	Vellinga	Chicago Women in Trades	Chicago	IL
Andrew	Wermes	Iowa Department of Education	Des Moines	IA

### RA Sponsors

First Name	Last Name	Company	City	State
		Independent Electrical Contractors	Chantilly	VA
Deyanira	Alcantara	Chesapeake Chapter		
Bryn	Burkard	Halshker & Associates	San Diego	CA
Greg	Chambers	Oberg Industries	Freeport	PA
Jacob	Denne	Economic Systems	Falls church	VA
Mark	Fuchs	St. Louis Carpenters Training Program	St. Louis	MO
Roscoe	Green	Labors Training School	Azusa	CA
Todd	Hawkins	IDC Atlanta	Atlanta	GA
Tom	Iacobucci	New England Carpenters Training Fund	Millbury	MA
		Independent Electrical Contractors	Houston	TX
Robert	Jones	Texas Gulf Coast		
George	Kettner	Economic Systems Incorporated	Falls church	VA
Tim	Klotz	Painters District Council 2	St. Louis	MO
			Washington	D.
Cindy	Koenig	National Guard		C.
Cliff	Moen	Bergstrom Electric	Grand Forks	ND
			Oklahoma	OK
James	Monteith	Western Oklahoma Electrical	City	
Vicki	Peeling	Operating Engineers Local 324 JATF	Howell	MI
		Independent Electrical Contractors	Houston	TX
Eddie	Rodriguez	Texas Gulf Coast		
Christy	Roemmich	North Dakota AREZ	Bismark	ND
Michael	Sabitoni	Rhode Island Building Trades	Middletown	RI
		The New England Apprenticeship Laborers	MA, RI, CT,	
Valerie	Scannell	Program	NH, ME, VT	
Jeremy	Sterner	Half Acre and Associates	Dearborn	MI
Michael	Waldo	El Paso JATC	El Paso	TX
Jimmy	Williamson	Agape Senior Care	Torrance	CA
Robert	Zukovich	Carpenters JATC	Pekin	IL

## **IX. APPENDIX A—SAMPLE MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING**

### **Oregon and Washington Consortium Agreement for the Success of Women in Apprenticeship**

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Oregon Tradeswomen, Incorporated (OTI), a community-based organization, and Apprenticeship & Non-Traditional Employment for Women (ANEW), a community-based organization, Washington and Oregon State and Federal RA Programs (RAPs) and Local Workforce Investment Act Agencies (LWIA) listed in this agreement will collaborate to ensure that women who wish to pursue non-traditional careers in construction trades, advanced manufacturing and transportation receive comprehensive, preparatory services and/or pre-apprenticeship training and retention services, leading to at least 100 women entering RA. These women will be prepared to enter and retain employment as apprentices through the Women in Apprenticeship and Non-Traditional Occupations (WANTO) grant program and will be co-enrolled in WIA to be tracked for the common measures.

#### **In this partnership, ANEW and OTI will do the following:**

- Provide outreach and orientation to recruit Washington and Oregon women interested in employment in non-traditional RAs for participation in the WANTO program.
- Provide priority services to Veterans and spouses of certain Veterans.
- Provide technical assistance to apprenticeship programs, labor unions, employers and employer associations which fosters a positive work environment and increases retention of women on-the-job.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the individual applicant's work readiness in order to develop a customized program of study for the female client that could include support services, training, or both.
- Based on assessment results, determine if the female applicant will be enrolled in pre-apprenticeship training or directly referred to registered apprenticeship.
- Provide financial support services that remove barriers to beginning apprenticeship, as needed, to qualified WANTO participants.
- Coordinate post-training job development services, including support networks and job clubs as well as one-on-one application assistance and career counseling.
- Track and report WANTO qualitative and quantitative data, including expenditures, placements, and leveraged resources to the DOL and partner organizations.

**In this partnership, RAP will do the following:**

- Participate in pre-apprenticeship training as/where appropriate.
- Ensure female pre-apprentices served by the WANTO program have access to specific, suitable apprenticeship employment opportunities during the grant period.
- Provide priority services to Veterans.
- Notify ANEW and/or OTI staff of pre-apprentice females who apply to their programs, and who need career, financial, or other support services or training in order to be ready and qualified to enter the apprenticeship, and facilitate contact with that individual.
- Provide ANEW and/or OTI staff with information about placement and retention of WANTO participants.

**In this partnership, LWIA will do the following:**

- Assist with outreach to WIA customers.
- Provide additional supportive services where possible.
- Co-enroll participants in WIA and track participants for performance outcomes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the last date below.

Signatures

## Building Futures Memorandum on Easier Access for Veterans into RA

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This **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)** is hereby made and entered into by Building Futures, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Veterans Industries, Employment Services Division in Providence, Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Building and Construction Trades Council.

### **A. Statement of Vision and Purpose**

The purpose of this MOA is to declare a mutual interest and desire to partner in order to help Veterans of military service access careers in the construction industry through formal RAs in the respective trades represented by the members of the Rhode Island Building and Construction Trades Council (RIBCTC).

The construction industry is poised for dramatic changes in the coming decade – driven both by industry growth and unprecedented levels of retirement among older workers. These projected labor demands will occur at a time when Rhode Island is experiencing demographic shifts in its workforce.

Veterans with an interest in pursuing building trades’ careers have had the opportunity to transition into the Building Futures’ pre-apprenticeship program. Through this opportunity, Veterans have successfully entered employment as registered apprentices within the respective building trades.

As Rhode Island’s construction Industry Partnership, Building Futures’ mission is to help the commercial construction industry meet its current and future needs for skilled labor, while creating career opportunities for low-income urban residents through quality RA programs. Veterans who enter and complete the Building Futures pre-apprenticeship benefit from extra layers of support – including case management services, intensive assessment, training in a multi-week simulated work experiences, and trade by trade career exploration – that help these young residents succeed in this demanding industry.

The purpose of this agreement is to ensure a cooperative and expeditious pathway for Veterans to access the range of pre-apprenticeship services offered at Building Futures. This agreement will provide for more efficient services to be provided to Veterans as they prepare for a career in the construction industry and seek placement in RAs of the RIBCTC members and leverage the strengths of each of the parties to this agreement. Through this agreement, veterans meeting the criteria of Building Futures shall gain access to and benefit from the ‘preferred entry’ agreement in place between Building Futures and the individual unions of the RIBCTC, which allows entry to RAs of RIBCTC members without regard to present applicant lists or application periods.

The use of preferred or direct entry programs, such as Building Futures, as a positive source of potential minority and women apprentices is specifically encouraged under Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) parts 29/30, § 30. 4 (C) (6) and in accordance with § 30. 5 (4) of the Federal Law and under the Rhode Island General Law Title 28, Chapter 45, Sec. 30. 4, (6).

**B. Roles and Responsibilities of Parties:**

**1. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS AND VETERANS INDUSTRIES PROGRAM SHALL:**

- a. Provide information regarding building trade careers through RAs to Veterans, in conjunction and coordination with Building Futures.
- b. Work with those Veterans who identify a career in construction as a goal to explore the building trades apprenticeship programs; understand the rigors of such a career choice and the role that Building Futures plays in helping Rhode Island residents' access construction careers.
- c. Refer interested Veterans to Building Futures at the appropriate times for orientation, application, and assessment for enrollment in Building Futures and/or 'preferred entry' placement in an affiliated RA program.
- d. Provide Building Futures relevant background information on veterans who enroll at Building Futures when such information is related to their successful completion of the program, establishing data sharing agreements and/or associated waivers to release information when necessary.

**2. BUILDING FUTURES SHALL:**

- a. Provide relevant information to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Veterans Industries Program as needed regarding Building Futures and the individual union apprenticeship programs of the RIBCTC members.
- b. Receive and assess referred Veterans within the State of Rhode Island for 'preferred entry' placement in the individual union apprenticeship programs of the RIBCTC members through the Building Futures pre-apprenticeship program. The pre-apprenticeship program includes case management and supportive services, as well as hands-on and classroom training focused on building core technical and employability skills needed in formal RA programs.
- c. Grant an industry-recognized pre-apprenticeship certificate of completion – issued by the State Apprenticeship Council in conjunction with Building Futures – to individuals who do successfully complete the full five week hands-on Building Futures pre-apprenticeship training component (BF200).
- d. Maintain strong working relationships with local unions, construction employers and the respective Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATC). Leverage these relationships to assist those veterans who have successfully completed the Building Futures pre-apprenticeship program in accessing RA programs and becoming employed as registered apprentices within the building and construction trades.



- e. When applicable, refer Veterans who are assessed as possessing the skills needed for success in the respective RA programs for ‘preferred entry’ through the agreement established between Building Futures and the individual unions of the RIBCTC, without completing the five week pre-apprenticeship training component (BF 200) of the Building Futures’ model. This assessment will be made by Building Futures through the four day hands-on evaluation (BF32).

**C. The RIBCTC shall:**

- a. Accept referred Veterans into the respective apprenticeship programs of the unions of the RIBCTC by ‘preferred entry’ through Building Futures, which shall be reflected in the individual apprenticeship standards and selection procedures respectively. Veterans referred in this manner may be admitted without regard of any present eligibility list, without regard to sex or race, so that all candidates may receive equal consideration encouraged by Title 29, CFR part 30. 4, (C), (6), in accordance with Title 29, CFR part 30. 5 (4).
- b. Dispatch those Veterans who have been registered into the individual union apprenticeship programs through Building Futures to employment, dependent on the availability of work.
  - i. Should the availability of work be low and candidates are not registered, their names will be listed on the current eligibility-ranking list of the JATC of the individual union to which they applied for future placement.
  - ii. The ranking of candidates is based on the individual apprenticeship programs of each of the respective RIBCTC unions. General requirements for entry into any RIBCTC affiliated apprenticeship programs are as follows:
    - 1. Candidates will be 18 years of age.
    - 2. Be capable of performing the requirements of the apprenticeship program in their chosen trade.
    - 3. Have a High School Diploma or GED.
    - 4. Have been referred via direct entry after being assessed by Building Futures or have successfully completed the Building Futures’ pre-apprenticeship program.
- c. RIBCTC member apprenticeship coordinators shall release information to Building Futures periodically regarding the performance of apprentices referred through this agreement in their respective programs, as outlined in specific waiver agreements.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the last date below.

Signatures

## X. APPENDIX B –PRE-APPRENTICESHIP QUALITY FRAMEWORK

### Pre-Apprenticeship Quality Framework

Training and Employment Notice No. 13-12, Defining a Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Related Tools and Resources [http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr\\_doc.cfm?docn=5842](http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=5842)

**Pre-apprenticeship Definition and Quality Framework.** Pre-apprenticeship is defined here as a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship program and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, Registered Apprenticeship program(s). A quality pre-apprenticeship program is one that incorporates the following elements:

- **Approved Training and Curriculum.** Training and curriculum based on industry standards and approved by the documented Registered Apprenticeship partner(s) that will prepare individuals with the skills and competencies needed to enter one or more Registered Apprenticeship program(s);
- **Strategies for Long-Term Success.** Strategies that increase Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for under-represented, disadvantaged or low-skilled individuals, such that, upon completion, they will meet the entry requirements, gain consideration, and are prepared for success in one or more Registered Apprenticeship program(s) including the following:
  - Strong recruitment strategies focused on outreach to populations under-represented in local, state, and national Registered Apprenticeship programs;
  - Educational and pre-vocational services that prepare individuals to meet the entry requisites of one or more Registered Apprenticeship programs (e.g. specific career and industry awareness workshops, job readiness courses, English for speakers of other languages, Adult Basic Education, financial literacy seminars, math tutoring, etc.); and
  - Assists in exposing participants to local, state and national Registered Apprenticeship programs and provides direct assistance to participants applying to those programs;
- **Access to Appropriate Support Services.** Facilitates access to appropriate support services during the pre-apprenticeship program and a significant portion of the Registered Apprenticeship program;
- **Promotes Greater Use of Registered Apprenticeship to Increase Future Opportunities.** To support the ongoing sustainability of the partnership between pre-apprenticeship providers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, these efforts should collaboratively promote the use of Registered Apprenticeship as a preferred means for employers to develop a skilled workforce and to create career opportunities for individuals;
- **Meaningful Hands-on Training that does not Displace Paid Employees.** Provides hands-on training to individuals in a simulated lab experience or through volunteer opportunities, when possible, neither of which supplants a paid employee but accurately simulates the industry and occupational conditions of the partnering Registered Apprenticeship sponsor(s) while observing proper supervision and safety protocols; and
- **Facilitated Entry and/or Articulation.** When possible, formalized agreements exist with Registered Apprenticeship sponsors that enable individuals who have successfully completed the pre-apprenticeship program to enter directly into a Registered Apprenticeship program and/or include articulation agreements for earning advanced credit/placement for skills and competencies already acquired.