

Strategic Objective 3.4—Create Dynamic Workforce

Foster the development of a dynamic and diverse transportation workforce through partnerships with the public sector, private industry, and educational institutions.

PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

The operation of the Nation’s transportation system depends on a highly skilled and qualified workforce, now and for the foreseeable future. To be successful in addressing unmet infrastructure needs, the Nation will need a broad spectrum of skilled workers. As demand for transportation services increase, both public and private sector transportation organizations face the ever-increasing difficulty of finding qualified workers and managers to fill priority occupations. DOT will collaborate with our partners in Government agencies, private and public employers, educational institutions, and workforce and labor organizations to identify and advance career and technical education pathways. These pathways support transportation jobs, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and transportation-related academic and certification programs for K–12 students, and improve pathways into various levels of transportation occupations for all segments of the population.

DOT Operating Administrations: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Maritime Administration (MARAD), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Office of the Secretary (OST).

Highways Workforce Training (FHWA)

Overview

Changes in the transportation industry and in the demographics of the U.S. workforce require public and private sector transportation organizations, training providers, academic institutions and other strategic partners to focus greater attention on the challenges facing transportation workforce development. DOT can successfully address these issues by collaborating with our partners in Government agencies, private and public employers, educational institutions, and professional, workforce and labor organizations.

Progress Update

In FY 2014, the National Highway Institute (NHI) provided training to more than 45,000 course registrants across more than 300 course offerings of instructor led, web-based and blended training approaches. Instructor-led training sessions accounted for 14,183 participants in 576 hosted sessions. The Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program awarded 171 fellowships to students pursuing transportation-related degrees at the associate through the advanced academic and professional degree levels. Of the total, 96 were awarded to Minority Serving Institutions.

Key Strategies

FHWA is authorized to allocate up to \$10M annually in On-the-Job-Training (OJT/SS) dollars to State DOTs to administer surface transportation and technology training and skill improvement programs. Successful programs are those that partner with State and local stakeholders with established skills training, recruitment and job placement abilities, such as, Workforce Development Boards, technical colleges and universities, unions, and trade associations. Like FHWA's OJT program, the objective is target minorities, women, and others with historic underutilization in the highway construction industry, and moves them into journey-level positions in skilled and semi-skilled crafts.

FHWA is supporting the Ladders of Opportunity initiative by identifying existing national successful practices in the recruiting, hiring, and retention of a sustainable transportation trades workforce. In September 2015, FHWA advertised a Notice of Funding Availability in an amount totaling \$3M. FHWA anticipates awarding amounts up to \$500,000 to successful applicants. State DOTs and their sub-recipients are eligible to apply. The Notice solicits proposals that promote innovative, nationally and regionally significant, highway construction workforce development programs that invest in America's economic growth and build ladders of opportunity into the middle class for American workers.

In addition, FHWA manages a number of training, education, and workforce development programs to address all aspects of the transportation education continuum including career awareness and preparation at the 6 through 12 grade levels, community college, university and post graduate, and for professional development for incumbent transportation professionals. The programs support public and private sector partner workforce development interests, and engage partners across the transportation and education communities to assist in program development. Programs include the following:

- The National Highway Institute provides high level technical and policy courses to the transportation industry; primary participants are State DOT employees.
- The Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) provides technical assistance and training to local agency and Tribal government managers and employees. There are 58 locations that include an LTAP Center and seven Regional Tribal Technical Program Centers.
- The Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program provides funds to colleges and universities to attract top students and support their pursuit of transportation careers.
- The Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Education (GAMTTEP) Program provides for grants to State and local education agencies to develop and deliver K–12 transportation-related curriculum and education enrichment programs with an emphasis on women and underrepresented groups. In 2014, a clearinghouse was established to broadly share the results of projects previously funded by GAMTTEP grants and to leverage other transportation education programs in support of the objectives.
- The Surface Transportation Workforce Development, Training and Education program allows core funds to be used for training, education and workforce development activities, at the discretion of the States, at 100 percent Federal funding.
- The Transportation Education Development Program will provide grants to institutions of higher education to develop and deliver, in partnership with industry, new curricula and education programs to prepare and train individuals at all levels of transportation. The program provides for innovation in workforce development.
- The National Summer Transportation Institute program funds State DOTs to work with colleges and universities as host sites to introduce middle and high school aged youth to the transportation industry. Approved programs are STEM focused and provide hands-on learning experiences through lab work and field trips.

Next Steps

The OJT/SS program will enhance the development of our Nation’s highway construction industry workforce. Jobs-Driven Skills Training Incentive program will strengthen workforce development services.

The Training and Education program will support NHI, LTAP, Eisenhower Fellowships, Transportation Education Development Program, and the Garrett Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program. These programs educate and development the current and future transportation workforce, transferring knowledge quickly and effectively. The Transportation Education Development Program will support five Regional Surface Transportation Workforce Centers that will facilitate partnerships and successful practices throughout the transportation, education, and workforce investment communities.

The successful applicants of the OJT/SS Notice of Funding Availability will establish training programs that provide career pathways that move targeted populations to sustainable careers. Successful applicants will establish programs that demonstrate partnerships with other State and local stakeholders with successful track records with providing skills training, recruitment and job placement. Successful programs will target on areas with high rates of unemployment and

address gaps in areas with current or projected workforce shortages in fields related to the transportation industry. FHWA will work to identify examples of established workforce development programs nationwide with established State and local partners. FHWA will showcase these practices as models for other States to consider.

Goal Leaders

Amy Lucero, Director of Technical Services, Federal Highway Administration

Irene Rico, Associate Administrator (Acting), Office of Civil Rights, Federal Highway Administration

Transit Workforce Training

Overview

The Public Transportation Workforce Development Program is part of Secretary Foxx's Ladders of Opportunity Initiative. The program promotes innovative nationally and regionally significant public transportation workforce development models and programs that invest in America's economic growth and help build ladders of opportunity into the middle class for American workers.

These grants help transit agencies create employment training programs, conduct outreach programs to increase minority and female employment in transit, conduct research on public transportation personnel and training needs, and provide training and assistance for minority business opportunities.

Progress Update

FTA announced the selection of 19 Innovative Public Transportation Workforce Development Program Projects to receive approximately \$9.5 million in FY 2015. Fourteen of the 19 cooperative agreements have been obligated.