

WRTP | BIG STEP
PAVING THE WAY

Dane County
PAVE YOUR PATH

Program Update 2025

January 22, 2026





WHO WE ARE

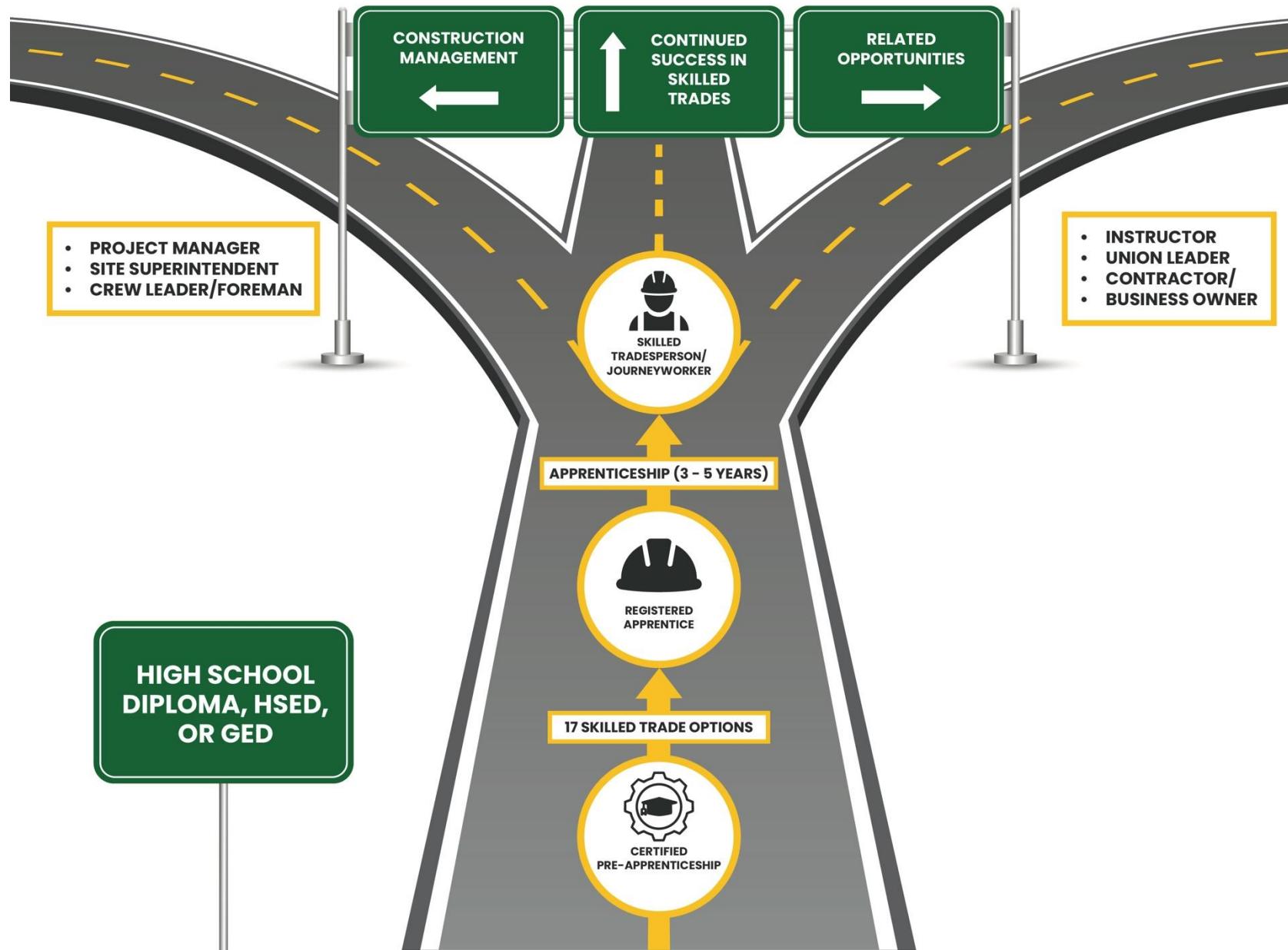
- WRTP (Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership) is the industrial sector
- BIG STEP (Building Industry Group Skilled Trade Employment Program) is the construction sector
- We are a nonprofit dedicated to helping people start careers in construction and manufacturing
- Our training programs are based on employer demand and partnerships with quality employers that pay family-supporting wages and provide strong benefits

STATEWIDE REACH

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CONSTRUCTION CAREER PATHWAY



HOW TO ENTER THE UNION CONSTRUCTION TRADES

1 APPLY AT
THE TRADE

2 MEET TESTING
REQUIREMENTS

3 ELIGIBILITY
FROM TRADE

4 COMPLETE YOUR
APPRENTICESHIP

5 BECOME A
JOURNEYWORKER

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To qualify for union apprenticeships, applicants need the following:

- ✓ Driver's License
- ✓ Social Security Card
- ✓ High school diploma, GED, or HSED
- ✓ **Passing Aptitude Test Scores**

BIG STEP APPRENTICESHIP READINESS PROGRAM

The BIG STEP Apprenticeship Readiness program provides one-on-one tutoring for participants testing for the building trades.

- 1 hour tutoring sessions
- In-person or online
- Open Monday-Saturday from 8 am-7pm

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

Standard Registered Apprenticeship
requirements for entry



Reside in Dane County



Participants have been subject to
arrest or conviction

ACCUPLACER TEST:

Each construction Registered Apprenticeship requires applicants to pass a combination of basic reading, arithmetic, and QRAS (quantitative reasoning, algebra, and stats) tests through the College Board Accuplacer testing system. Each trade has a different minimum score requirement that applicants need to hit in order to be

2025 OUTREACH & RECRUITMENT EVENTS

- 8 JustDane Reentry Resource Fairs
- 35 Outreach events, including BIG STEP programming orientations
- Electrician Union Career Fair
- Monthly Joint Apprenticeship Council meetings
- Community Outreach with Re-Entry partners

PAVE YOUR PATH: 2025 REVIEW

118

In-Custody
Participants
Served

57

Out-of-
Custody
Participants
Served

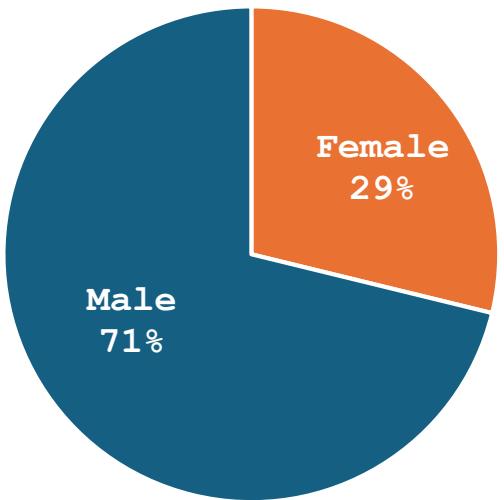
Entry-Level Construction Skills
Pre-Apprenticeship Training
(*in partnership with Madison College*)

Entry-Level Manufacturing Skills
Pre-Apprenticeship Training
(*in partnership with Madison College*)

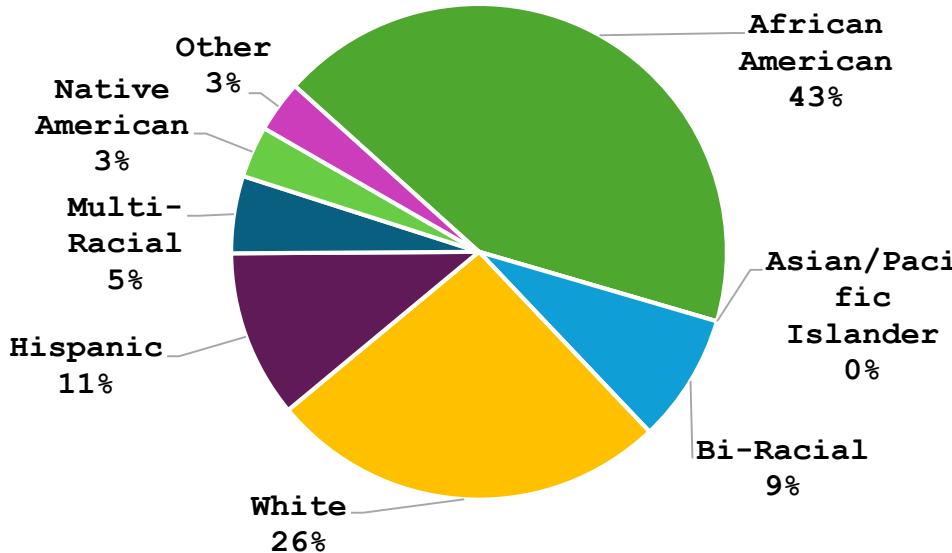
Accuplacer Testing
for trade(s) of interest

DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE SERVED IN CUSTODY

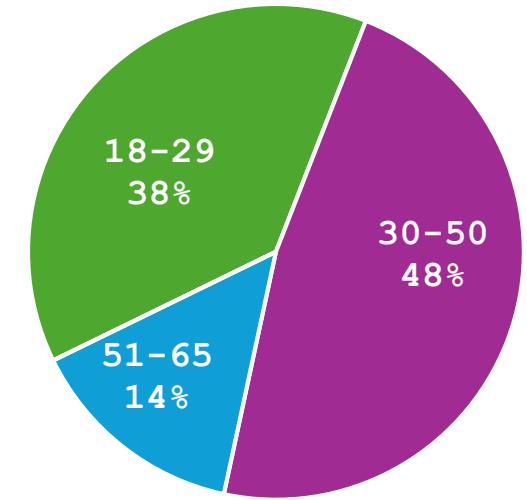
Gender



Race

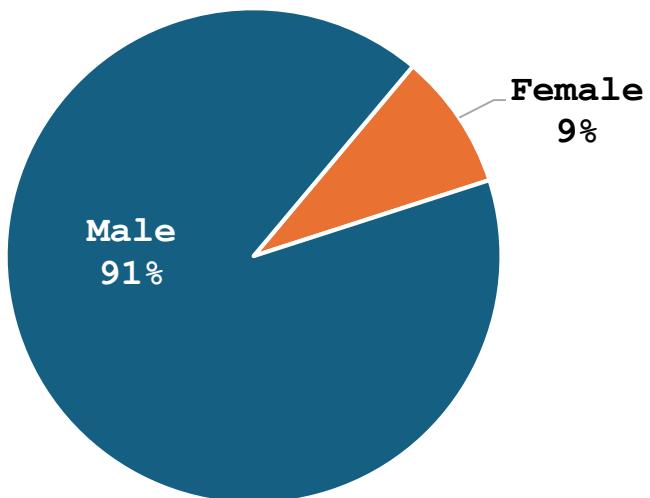


Age

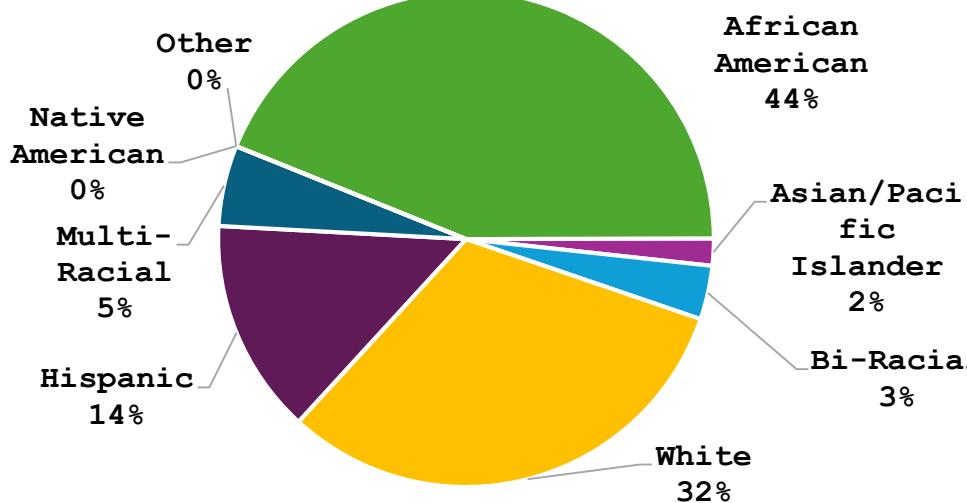


DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE SERVED OUT OF CUSTODY

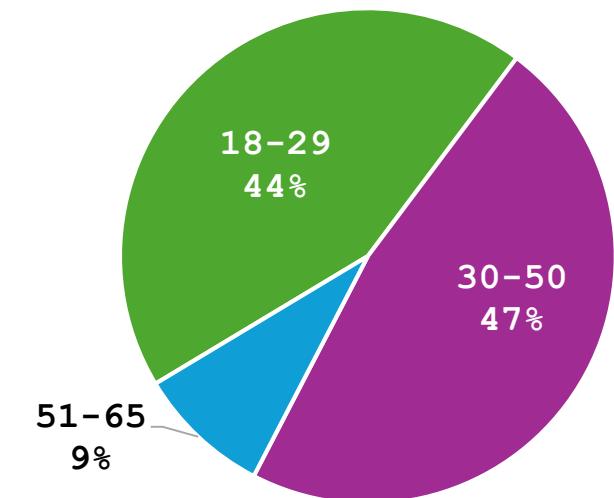
Gender



Race



Age



REFERRAL PARTNERS

- Dane County Diversion programs
- Dane County Sheriff's Office
- Dane County Food Share Employment Training
- Dane County Job Center
- WorkSmart
- JustDane
- Pave Your Path Program participants



POSITIVE WORD OF MOUTH

increased interest from reentry individuals who heard about Pave Your Path from others who received training and services

WRTP | BIG STEP TRAININGS & SERVICES



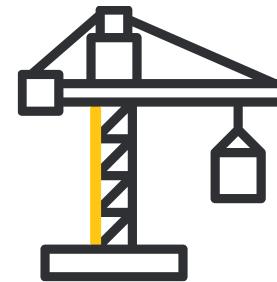
SUMMER TRADES
ACADEMY



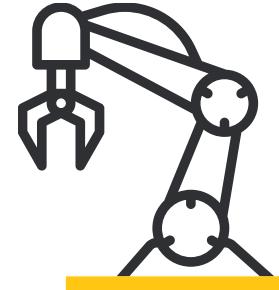
BIG STEP
BUILDERS



CREAM CITY
YOUTHBUILD



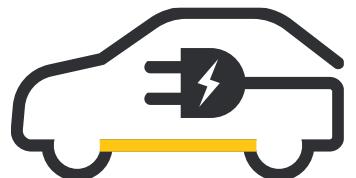
ENTRY-LEVEL
CONSTRUCTION SKILLS
(ELCS)



ENTRY-LEVEL
MANUFACTURING
SKILLS (ELMS)



HIGHWAY
CONSTRUCTION
SKILLS TRAINING
(HCST)



ELECTRIC VEHICLE
SKILLED TRADES
EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAM (EVSTEP)



WATER & SEWER
ENTRY-LEVEL
CONSTRUCTION
SKILLS (ELCS)



BIG STEP
APPRENTICESHIP
READINESS
SERVICES



EMPLOYMENT

Q1 OUTCOMES

1st Pave Your Path In-Custody group at the Dane County Jail:

- 20 initial participants
- 8 participants withdrew
- 12 completed the eight-week program
- 8 participants passed tests for trade requirements
- 2 participants released from incarceration in the middle of this program and enrolled in our Entry-Level

JustDane Reentry Service Fairs, referral partners, word of mouth, walk-ins:

- 15 participants
- 100% completed and passed their Accuplacer testing
- In our Entry-Level Construction Skills training, 2 participants enrolled in cohort 1
 - ✓ Both in cohort 1 completed

Q2 OUTCOMES

2nd Pave Your Path In-Custody group at the Dane County Jail:

- 31 initial participants
- 18 participants withdrew or were released
- 13 completed the eight-week program
- 11 participants passed tests for trade requirements

JustDane Reentry Service Fairs, referral partners, word of mouth, walk-ins:

- 20 participants
- 4 took and passed Accuplacer testing
- 5 referred to the Electricians union to begin application and testing process
- In our Entry-Level Construction Skills training, 7 enrolled in cohort 2

Q3 OUTCOMES

3rd Pave Your Path In-Custody group at Dane County Jail:

- 29 initial participants
- 15 participants completed the eight-week program
- 13 participants passed tests in their respective trades

Out-Of-Custody Services:

- 3 participants (including 2 former Pave Your Path participants)
- Second cohort of Entry-Level Manufacturing Skills Training
 - ✓ 2 completed
 - ✓ 1 did not complete due to employment

Q4 OUTCOMES

4th Pave Your Path In-Custody group at the Dane County Jail:

- 38 initial participants
- 22 participants completed the eight-week program
- 17 participants passed tests in their respective trades



4 participants began Union employment!

- ✓ Carpenters Union on a Solar Field (1st Cohort)
- ✓ Bricklayers Union (2nd Cohort)
- ✓ Painters Union
- ✓ Iron Workers Union

STORY OF SUCCESS: Jaton M.

- Jaton was part of our 1st Pave Your Path In-Custody Cohort
- After he was released, he:
 - joined our ELCS training
 - attended our career fair in partnership with Operation Fresh Start
 - attended tutoring and completed his testing requirements
 - received his letter of introduction with the Plumbers Union
- During ELCS training, he was placed as a Plumbing Pre-Apprentice with Dave Jones, starting full time at \$18/hour
- After some time with Dave Jones, Jaton decided that plumbing was not the right fit for him; he transitioned to pursuing the Carpenter's Union

JATON
is now making
\$28.02/hr as a
Carpenter



STORY OF SUCCESS: Paul W.

- Paul came to us initially out-of-state as an FSET participant
 - Was incarcerated after some time of us working together
- He joined our 3rd Cohort of Pave Your Path, participated in all 8 weeks, passed his tests for the Bricklayers, and initiated contact with the union while still incarcerated
- For our 4th Cohort, he volunteered as a mentor for the men's groups
- Upon his release in November, he connected with the Bricklayers again and started his employment as a certified construction bricklayer

PAUL
is now making
\$35.01/hr as a
Bricklayer



Questions?



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