

WRTP | BIG STEP
PAVING THE WAY

Dane County **PAVE YOUR PATH**

Program Update 2025

January 22, 2026





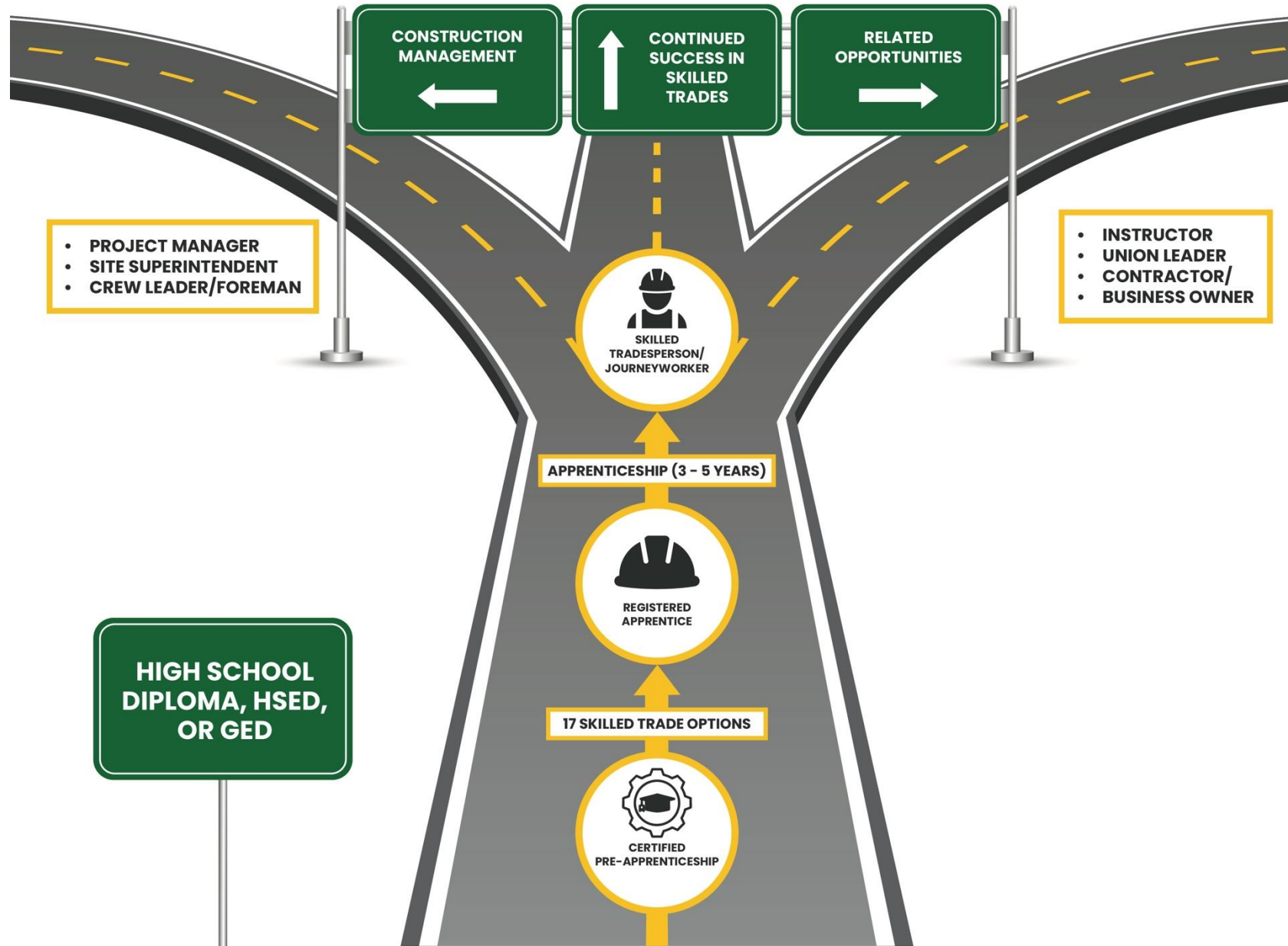
WHO WE ARE

- **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**

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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
Participant
s Served

57

Out-of-
Custody
Participant
s Served

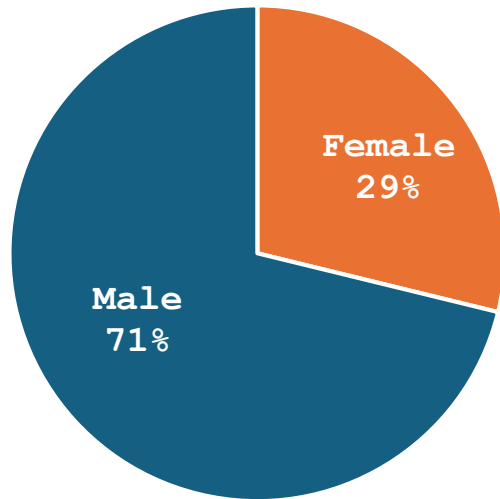
Entry-Level Construction Skills
Pre-Apprenticeship Training
(in partnership with Madison College)

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

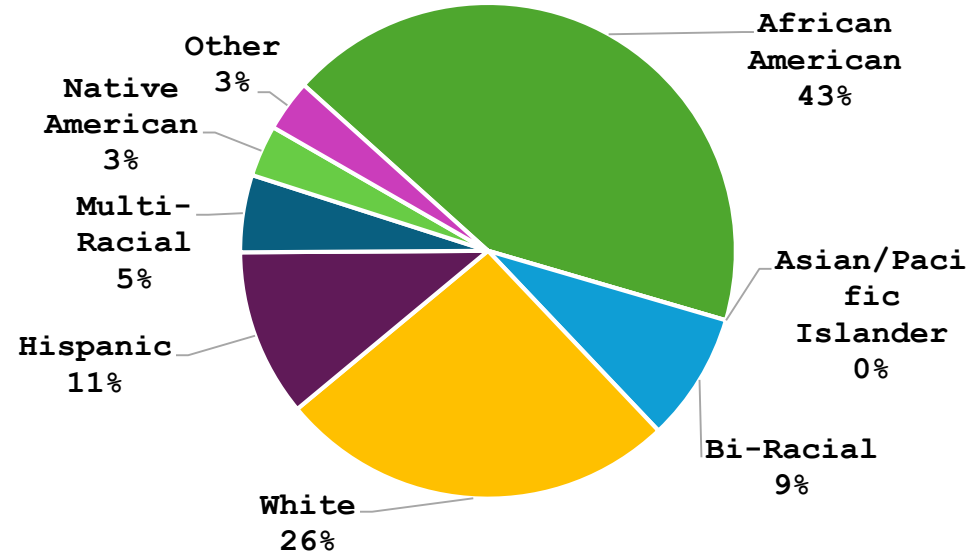
Accuplacer Testing
for trade(s) of interest

DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE SERVED IN CUSTODY

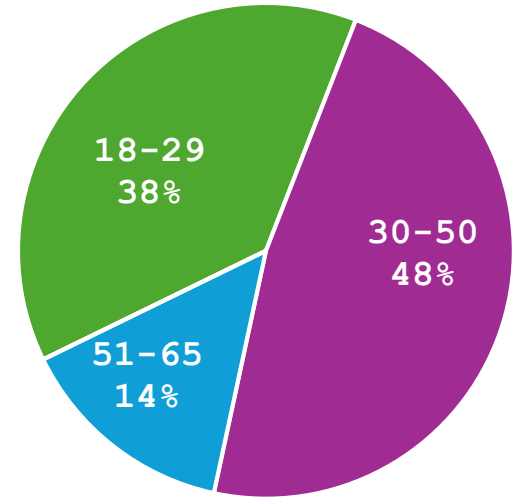
Gender



Race

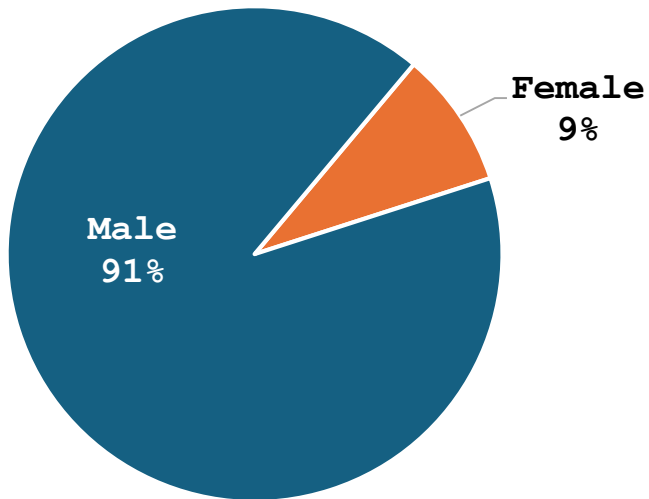


Age

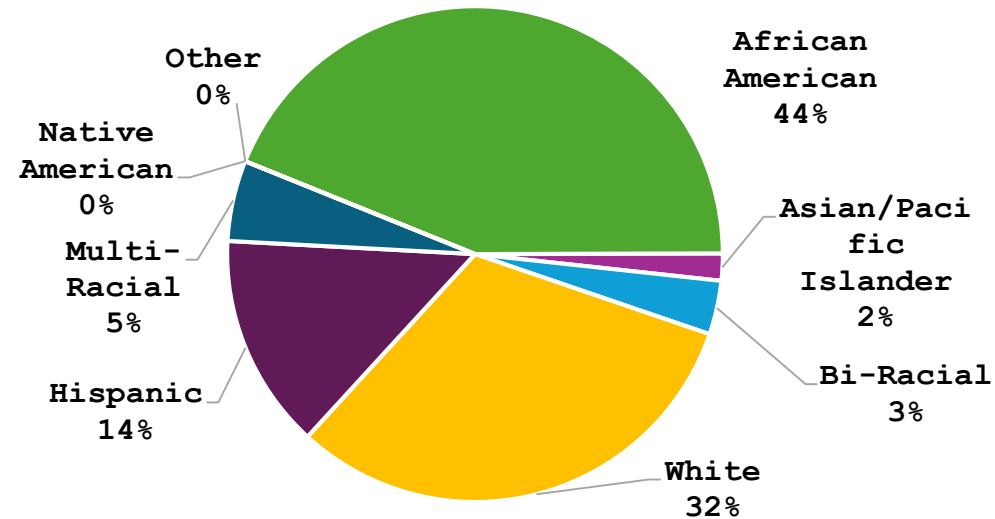


DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE SERVED OUT OF CUSTODY

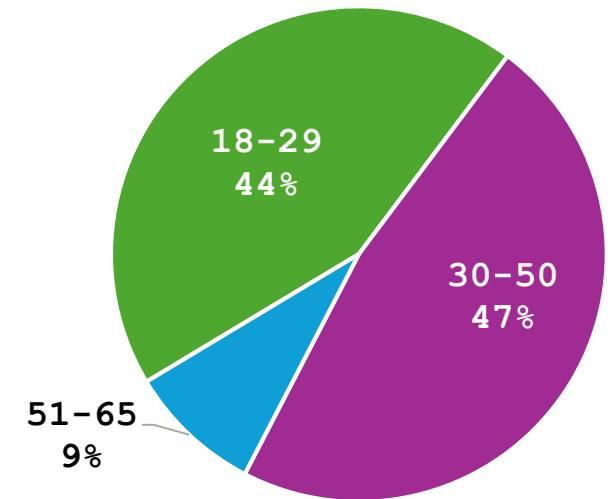
Gender



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



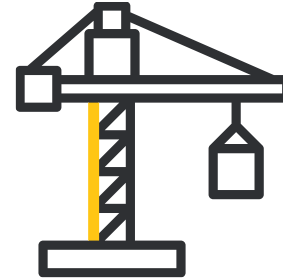
**SUMMER TRADES
ACADEMY**



**BIG STEP
BUILDERS**



**CREAM CITY
YOUTHBUILD**



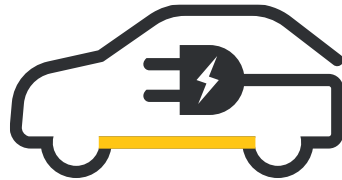
**ENTRY-LEVEL
CONSTRUCTION SKILLS
(ELCS)**



**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: Jatón M.

JATÓN

is now making

\$28.02/hr as a

Carpenter



- Jatón 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, Jatón decided that plumbing was not the right fit for him; he transitioned to pursuing the Carpenter's Union

STORY OF SUCCESS: Paul W.

PAUL

is now making
\$35.01/hr as a
Bricklayer



- 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 full-time bricklayer

Questions?



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