

A group of four diverse professionals are gathered around a table in a modern office setting. A woman with short, curly brown hair, wearing a striped blazer, is leaning forward and smiling warmly at the others. To her right, a man with short dark hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is also smiling and looking towards the woman. On the far right, a woman with dark hair pulled back is partially visible, looking towards the group. On the left, another woman is partially visible, looking towards the center. They appear to be in a collaborative meeting. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office space with large windows.

Driving Workforce Innovation:

The High Road Training Fund's Blueprint for
Quality Jobs and Organizational Resilience

Final Report

June 18, 2025

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Introduction

The High Road Training Fund (HRTF) advances California's commitment to equity, job quality, and climate resilience. Grounded in the [High Road Vision](#), which was launched by the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) as a model for innovative sector-based workforce strategies, the HRTF builds on the success of High Road Training Partnerships (H RTP). These partnerships bring together private and public employers, local organizations, and labor to support industry-led efforts to improve job quality and economic sustainability.

Established through a collaboration between Jobs for the Future (JFF), the CWDB, the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), and the Governor's Office, the HRTF provides funding to accelerate and expand the high road approach across industries. The HRTF's increased investment in H RTPs allowed partnerships to strengthen their organizational capacity, grow and enhance existing programs, and more intentionally serve priority populations.

This report presents a comprehensive framework outlining best practices for an effective workforce funding model. It highlights key strategies in establishing strategic partnerships, optimizing investments, designing efficient funding structures, and improving fund management processes. The framework aims to guide stakeholders in strengthening workforce development initiatives through sustainable funding models.

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About Jobs for the Future

Jobs for the Future (JFF) transforms U.S. education and workforce systems to drive economic success for people, businesses, and communities. www.jff.org

About Social Policy Research Associates (SPR)

Serving as the developmental evaluator for the High Road Training Fund, Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) is a nationally recognized research, evaluation, and technical assistance firm. They specialize in providing rigorous and responsive services related to workforce development, effective philanthropy, education, youth, diversity and equity, health, and comprehensive social services. Clients range from public agencies to community-based foundations and local nonprofits.



Fund Overview

- ▶ HRTF Goals
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- ▶ Logic Model
- ▶ Fund Design and Mechanisms

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HRTF Goals

The High Road Training Fund (HRTF) is an innovative fund led by a public-private partnership to raise private funding and maximize public investments by providing large sub-grants of up to \$500,000 to High Road Partnerships.

The HRTF addresses several key funding challenges:

Unforeseen Costs

It is not uncommon for partnerships to run into unexpected expenses (such as higher-than-anticipated administrative costs). When this happens, there are often limitations on how partnerships can use public funding to cover the increased costs. The only option may be to amend budgets and reallocate funds that were originally earmarked for other uses.

Immediate Deployment Needs

Partnerships often find that they need to use funds sooner than expected to get initiatives off the ground. While HRTF funding can often cover the costs related to the development of programs, there are cases where partnerships will need relatively quicker access to additional funds to cover costs that arise as they ramp up initiatives.

Public Funding Limitations

HRTFs receive funding through a variety of public sources and each source has its own set of rules and regulations for how the money can be used. In addition, public funding is often distributed on a reimbursement basis, leading HRTFs to take on costs upfront.

Overview of the Public-Private Partnership Model

The HRTF raised private funding to supplement California public resources that accelerate the impact of High Road Training Partnerships (H RTP), which are designed to expand economic mobility opportunities for all workers, support training that helps workers build skills, increase competitiveness for high road employers, and ensure long-term environmental sustainability for the state and its communities. The HRTF serves as a **public-private partnership** and funding vehicle that H RTPs can turn to when they need supplemental funding.

California State Partners



Office of Governor
GAVIN NEWSOM



Philanthropy Partners



CRANKSTART



THE CALIFORNIA
Wellness
FOUNDATION



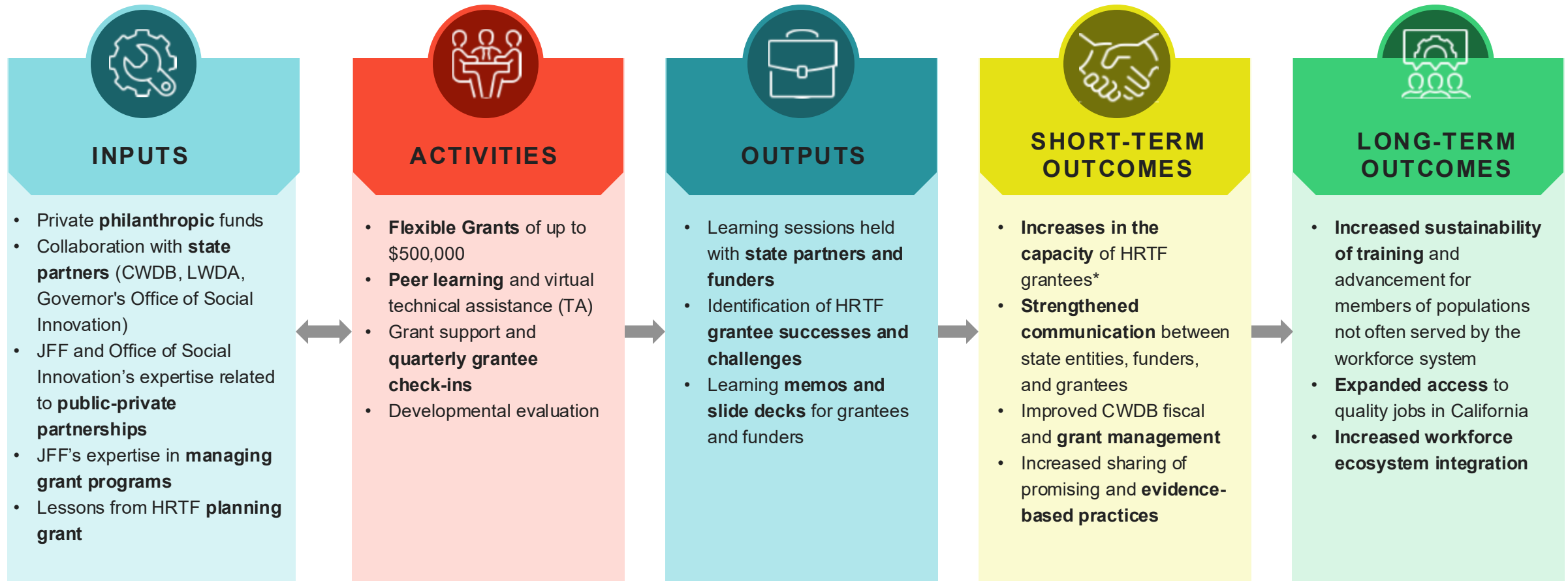
The **James Irvine**
Foundation



CONRAD N. HILTON
FOUNDATION

Logic Model

JFF and Social Policy Research Associates developed a logic model to articulate how inputs and activities would yield outputs and short- and long-term outcomes. As part of HRTF's developmental evaluation, this model was revised to capture pivots occurring during the project period.



*Note: Increased capacity refers to an organization's ability to hire new staff, market to and recruit members of of target populations, and improve operational infrastructure, etc.

High Road Training Fund Structure and Design

Public Funding

The CWDB provides public funding dollars to the partnerships

Public Funding Sources

- California Climate Investments
- Department of Labor
- Education Stabilization Fund-Reimagine Workforce Preparation
- H RTP: Resilient Workforce Fund
- H RTP: Resilient Workforce Program
- WIOA H RTP 3.0

High Road Partnerships Managed by CWDB

RFP for
H RTPs

High Road Training Fund grantees



Disbursed
grantee
funds

High Road Training Fund Managed by JFF

Pooled
funds

Philanthropic Funders



H RTP/HRCC Evaluation
Conducted by UCLA

H RTP Developmental Evaluation
Conducted by Social Policy Research Associates

Fundraising

- ▶ Overview of the Fundraising Approaches
- ▶ Fundraising Learning and Future Opportunities

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Fundraising Overview



During the initial planning phase of the HRTF, JFF joined forces with the Governor's Office, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), and the Labor Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) to design the structure of the HRTF pooled fund¹ and cultivate philanthropic partnerships across the state. The HRTF team aimed to attract philanthropic partners with strategic funding priorities spanning diverse sectors, geographies, and priority populations. The original vision was to design a coalition of funders who would bring complementary skills, interests, and expertise.

Through prospect research, funder outreach meetings and strategic communications and events, the HRTF team was successful at raising \$5.47 million from five philanthropic partners: the Hilton Foundation, the Irvine Foundation, the Crankstart Foundation, the California Wellness Foundation, and the Younger Family Fund. These organizations range from family offices to large global funders, and they're based in a wide range of regions across the state of California.

¹ Pooled funds are investment vehicles where multiple investors combine their money into a single fund to achieve a common investment goal

Learning and Future Opportunities

1

Set achievable fundraising targets informed by early and ongoing prospect research.

To ensure alignment and clear expectations on the fundraising goals, conduct thorough prospect research during the planning and design phase to assess the number of funders that could potentially contribute to the fund, based on strategic alignment of investment criteria, such as regions across California, priority industries and regions.

2

Identify anchor philanthropy partners to set criteria for the pooled fund and support peer-led fundraising outreach.

Many pooled funds are led by philanthropic partners, where the “anchor funders” are responsible for identifying co-investors and managing the fund. HRTF took a different approach: The fund design and process was driven primarily by needs of grantees and collaboration with state partners, with JFF serving as a third-party intermediary to manage the process. Identifying “anchor funders” with extensive expertise and networks across the philanthropy sector would assist with ongoing funder cultivation and partnership efforts.

3

Institutionalize partnership agreements to address leadership turnover.

In the early planning and design phase, develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or another type of partnership agreement to ensure alignment on roles and responsibilities across state agencies, the intermediary organization, and other philanthropic partners. The partnership agreement should clearly articulate who will be responsible for (or assume co-ownership of) fundraising activities. These partnership agreements can help to address leadership turnover across partner organizations so that the partnership governance structure outlasts the individuals who originally architected the fund.

Grant Administration

- ▶ Guiding Principles
- ▶ Grantee Selection Criteria
- ▶ Grantee Application Process
- ▶ Cohorts 1 and 2 Grantee Profiles
- ▶ Peer Learning and Technical Assistance

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Guiding Principles

In building out the grant requirements and application process, the team kept in mind the principles of trust-based philanthropy. Trust-based philanthropy is an approach to grantmaking that seeks to address power imbalances between funders and grantees by prioritizing relationships, transparency, and long-term support.

The guiding principles included:

Philosophy of Limited Burden

The HRTF prioritized not duplicating tasks for applicants because one of the eligibility criteria was that they had to have already received HRTF funding from the CWDB. The fact that they had gone through that process meant they had already given the CWDB information that could be helpful for the HRTF review team. Therefore, we streamlined the questions in the HRTF application so as not to duplicate information the CWDB already had.

Multi-Year, Flexible Funding

The fund provided flexible, long-term grants to give organizations stability and the ability to respond to emerging needs. We were intentional about this during the grant design process and incorporated HRTF feedback in the eventual grant components. This included funding amounts of \$400,000 to \$500,000, a two-to-three-year time horizon to spend down the grant, and annual upfront payments.

Guiding Principles (continued)

Streamlined Application and Reporting

We intentionally reduced burdensome paperwork and administrative processes to let nonprofits focus on their missions. Further, we limited the reporting requirements. Instead of quarterly reports, the grantees and our program team had informal quarterly check-in calls where we'd discuss progress toward goals, challenges, and opportunities. We'd also approach these conversations as technical assistance opportunities whenever possible.

Transparent and Responsive Communication

We encouraged funders and grantees to engage in open, two-way dialogue to build trust. As we designed the grant, we collected and implemented grantee feedback.

Support Beyond the Funding

We provided access to non-monetary resources to strengthen grantee organizations' potential for capacity-building and forging connections in the field. This included a variety of technical assistance supports, peer learning opportunities with other HRTPs, and, ultimately, the HRTF Sustainability Toolkit.

Grantee Selection Criteria



Cohort 1

Eligibility was limited to HRTPs in the Greater Los Angeles area serving young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are disconnected from work and learning (a population sometimes described as “opportunity youth.”) Selection criteria were developed with input from the CWDB team.



Cohort 2

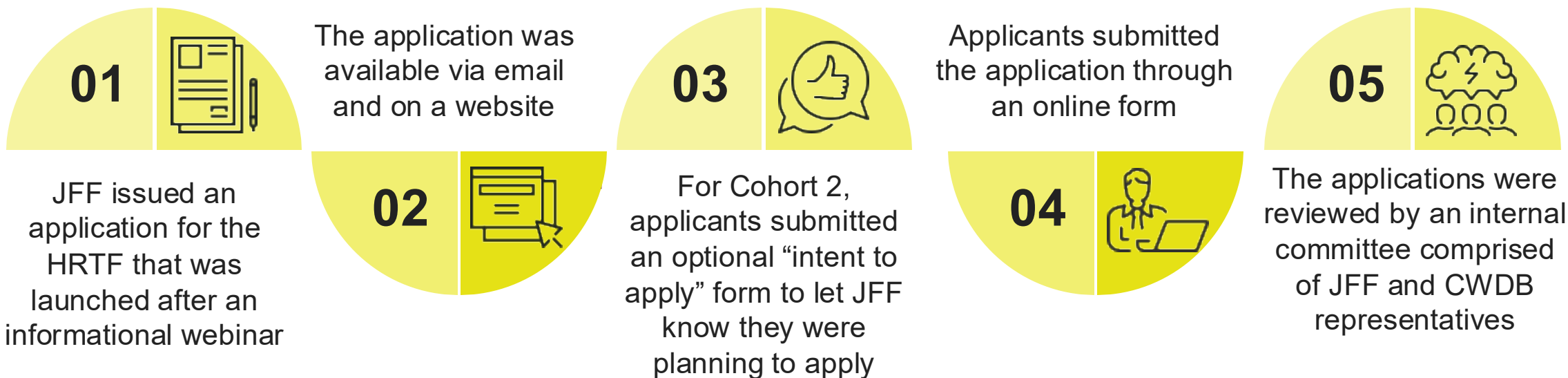
The eligibility pool was expanded to include all HRTPs. Selection criteria were refined based on lessons from the first round, incorporating new scoring categories such as “Track Record and Feasibility to Achieve Partnership Goals” and “Equity-Centered Approaches,” along with new weighting criteria.

Grantee Selection Criteria (continued)

Category	Definition	Weight	Weight Explanation
Need and Additionality*	The partnership demonstrates a significant need for private funding through the HRTF. The partnership demonstrates that without the award, achieving the goals of the partnership would be difficult.	0.4	This category receives the highest weight since it addresses a primary reason the HRTF was established — to supplement funding gaps that an HRTF's public funding doesn't cover.
Intended Impact and Alignment to California's High Road Vision	The partnership demonstrates that the award will support its ability to further drive its goals on equity, job quality, and climate resilience. The work significantly aligns with California's High Road Vision goals or strategies in a specific program area or field of work.	0.1	This category is weighted less because it is implied that partnerships are committed to California's High Road Vision, at least at a foundational level, to be able to receive HRTF funding. This is still important to factor into the rubric because the HRTF intends to further the impact of public dollars.
Track Record & Feasibility to Achieve Partnership Goals	The partnership demonstrates capability of achieving its desired goals through this funding. The applicant has a track record of success and impact on its constituency or target population.	0.3	This is important for understanding whether the partnership will be able to utilize these flexible funds in a way that will advance its goals.
Equity-Centered Approaches	The partnership demonstrates that equity is central to its operations. This is slightly different than commitment to California's High Road Vision; we are looking at policies and practices that the partnership has implemented that promote equity in its approaches and activities.	0.2	Equity is a key component to all HRTFs — it is foundational to receiving funding from the CWDB and to California's High Road vision.

* "Additionality" refers to expected outcomes that would not occur without the added HRTF funding.

Grantee Application Process



Cohort 1 Participant Success Story



Nicholas, an 18-year-old from Los Angeles who dropped out of high school, discovered the Hospitality Training Academy (HTA) through a family connection. Intrigued based on his interest in cooking and prior volunteer experience, he attended an information session for HTA's 18-day Prep Cook Training. With help from AJCC partners, he secured a training stipend, enrolled, and overcame initial scheduling and time management challenges with support from HTA staff.

Nicholas was determined to succeed, undergoing rigorous training in kitchen safety, sanitation, knife skills, and various culinary techniques. He earned certifications and received resume-building assistance. After he completed the training, Nicholas interviewed with union employer partners and chose entry-level employment as a dining busser at the Beverly Hilton, starting at \$15.50 per hour plus tips and \$23.25 per hour for overtime. Anticipating a wage increase to \$19 per hour after three months, he is on a path to fulfilling his goal of becoming a cook with ongoing support from HTA.

“

Th funding is very, very, very helpful because very little funding helps you build your infrastructure. So as you're building and trying to stay innovative in what can sometimes feel like a very rigid environment, I feel this funding continues to allow us to have those conversations. And then also, whether it's hiring a consultant or trying to convert that into staffing positions and making that more sustainable, I feel like this funding is helping us plant those seeds to be able to do that work.

**— Amber Roth, Executive Director,
Worker and Education
Resource Center**

Grantee Profiles

Cohort 1



The [Worker Education and Resource Center](#) provides quality workforce development programs in partnership with public service and safety net employers in Los Angeles County.



The [Hospitality Training Academy](#) provides a variety of workforce development, apprenticeship, and training programs within the hospitality, food service, and leisure/tourism industries.



The [Miguel Contreras Foundation](#) is the fiscal agent for the High Road to Electric Bus Manufacturing program, which is developing a training program to prepare the green manufacturing workforce to meet the demand for electric vehicles in Los Angeles.



The [United Food and Commercial Workers International Union](#) [WorkForward](#) provides job skills training for workers in grocery retail, cannabis, and other food-related industries to create quality job pathways.

Grantee Profiles

Cohort 2



[El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center](#) is a health care pioneer in California's Inland Empire region. It focuses on identifying, training, deploying, and supporting community health workers and promoters.



[The Empowerment Center](#) works to create a resilient workforce by training mental health professionals and paraprofessionals to address the holistic needs of the Inland Empire's regional labor market.



The [Partnership for a Better San Diego](#) is dedicated to combating food insecurity and building a labor movement in their region through community outreach and engagement. It provides training and development opportunities to improve access to quality union jobs.



The [Center for Caregiver Advancement](#) is the largest training provider for long-term care workers in California. Its mission is to build a workforce of highly trained caregivers that many Californians can't live without.

Peer Learning and Technical Assistance

To provide grantees with an opportunity to learn from one another and strengthen their sustainability, the JFF team offered four different modalities of customized support:

Collaborative Design and Technical Assistance Sessions

Topic-specific discussions engaging HRTPs and stakeholders on key workforce issues, including population-specific strategies and financial sustainability.

[Sustainability Toolkit](#)

A publicly accessible collection of practical resources and guides designed to enhance organizational resilience and financial sustainability for HRTPs and other nonprofits.

Quarterly Cohort Spaces

Optional virtual gatherings where grantees can connect, share challenges, and exchange best practices.

Quarterly Grantee Check-ins

Real-time feedback and assessed technical assistance needs, eliminating the delay of waiting for the annual report. These informal, conversational check-ins also helped build trust with grantees.

Impact

- ▶ Value of Flexible Funding
- ▶ Population Deep Dive: Focus on Youth
- ▶ Grantee Sustainability
- ▶ Peer Learning and Community Building
- ▶ Systems-Level Learning

04

Value of Flexible Funding

By design, HRTF offered grantees flexibility (as long as it aligned with the HRTF mission) in how they wanted to use their grant money to enhance H RTP programmatic impact. Cohort 1 and 2 grantees used their flexible HRTF funds to:

<p>Bridge State Funding</p> <p>Grantees used HRTF money to overcome challenges caused by factors such as the state’s inability to provide funding advances when contract payments were delayed, late invoice payments, and delays in budget modifications (especially for grants funded by WIOA).</p>	<p>Build Capacity and Plan for Sustainability</p> <p>To improve their ability to access and administer a variety of funding sources beyond California H RTP funds, grantees hired consultants or supported staff time to assist with strategic planning, grant writing, fiscal compliance, and online learning management systems.</p>
<p>Invest in Operational Infrastructure</p> <p>Because many public grants impose limits on spending for "administrative" costs, grantees used HRTF money to fund new staff positions and systems in critical functions like fiscal, human resources, data reporting, communications, and partnership development that are key to long-term program success.</p>	<p>Focus on Worker Needs</p> <p>Grantees used HRTF funds to directly support workers who participate in their programs. This includes stipends to attend training, stipends for meals and transportation, training facilities that enhance participant experiences, and language classes and interpreters for people who are learning English. While some of these activities are allowable under the H RTP grant, HRTF allowed for immediate pivots in real time to meet the needs of workers, especially those facing barriers limiting their access to training, rather than waiting months for a budget modification.</p>

“

Flexible funding gives us an opportunity to be innovative and really think outside of the box.

— Armando Loza, Executive Director,
Miguel Contreras Foundation

Population Deep Dive

Focus on Youth

While all HRTFs have a focus on specific target populations with the greatest needs for quality training and employment, Cohort 1 HRTF grantees identified a particular focus on building or initiating strategies to serve young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are seeking opportunities to advance in the labor market — a population sometimes referred to as opportunity youth.

We learned that grantees used HRTF funding to support young people in these ways:

- Outreach events and marketing to recruit young people
- Coordination with American Jobs Centers of California (AJCC) to co-enroll them into the WIOA system for supportive services
- Partnership building with entities that support young people, especially providers of housing, mental health services, and transportation.

Grantees shared some remaining capital needs to support this population of young people:

- Additional training space and equipment
- Modifying pre-employment training approaches to include youth-focused professional development and social and emotional topics
- Expansion of on-the-job retention services to at least one year to help increase participants' success at work

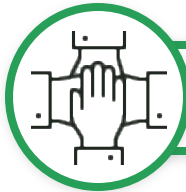
Grantee Sustainability



As shifts in the state and federal budgetary landscape contributed to the uncertainty of future rounds of HRTF funding, the JFF team shifted their focus in Year 2 of the HRTF to provide targeted technical assistance (TA) to grantees on sustainability planning. Through a series of virtual TA sessions and the development of a [sustainability toolkit](#), grantees gained access to resources and subject matter experts on key topics, including these:



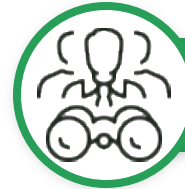
Capacity and skills needed to manage funds



Collaborating with the public workforce system



Identifying philanthropic funding sources



Strategic funder communication and outreach



Braiding multiple funding sources

Grantee Sustainability (continued)



The JFF team co-designed the Sustainability Toolkit with input from HRTF grantees about resources to include and topics it would be most useful to address. As a result, the toolkit includes case studies and strategies that draw directly on grantee experiences. These sustainability discussions have inspired grantees to explore innovative funding models, such as social enterprises, work-based learning opportunities like internships and apprenticeships, fee-for-service strategies, and securing public training funds through the Eligible Training Provider List.

Grantees have also dedicated time and resources to strategic planning initiatives aimed at expanding their funding diversification efforts, including developing organizational theories of change, evaluating funder relationship management tools, and enhancing impact measurement and storytelling.

Additionally, JFF provided increased access to resources for the grantees through connections to aligned philanthropic funders, letters of support for other public funding opportunities, and spotlights in statewide events and publications.

Peer Learning and Community Building



Throughout the project, JFF intentionally created spaces for HRTF grantees to connect both formally and informally to celebrate successes, address challenges, and reflect on grant processes. The diverse range of organizations across Cohorts 1 and 2—they varied in size, tenure, and experience managing public funds and workforce training—fostered meaningful peer learning. More experienced organizations shared best practices on partnership development, funder engagement, and impact measurement. Grantees also exchanged recommendations to strengthen operational infrastructure, such as hiring HR and marketing consultants and improving budget administration.

Beyond direct grantee support, JFF contributed to the broader HRTF community by facilitating discussions and presentations on financial sustainability and flexible funding through the UC Berkeley Labor Center's community of practice. Additionally, JFF participated in an event called Lobby Day organized by the California Labor Federation, advocating for continued funding of the High Road initiative.

“

The HRTF-JFF team has been very good about bringing all of its grantees together to reflect and brainstorm about ideas and challenges they are having and learn from in order to learn from each other and share best practices.

**— Adrineh Terantonians, Director of Workforce Systems
and Partnership, Hospitality Training Academy**

Systems-Level Learning

Since the HRTF was a new public-private partnership model with expected successes and challenges, a developmental evaluation—a structured approach to monitoring, assessing, and providing feedback during program design—was integrated from the outset. This evaluation aimed to document key lessons learned and enable real-time program adjustments. Social Policy Research Associates served as HRTF’s developmental evaluator, conducting data collection through interviews, surveys, and observations, and facilitating sense-making sessions to share insights with grantees, funders, and state partners in real time.



Systems-Level Learning (continued)

State Process Enhancements

HRTF fostered ongoing dialogue with CWDB to enhance grant administration through the design of the HRTF application process and developmental evaluation sense-making sessions. For instance, JFF and CWDB leadership and staff collaborated closely throughout the Cohorts 1 and 2 application review and selection processes. CWDB leadership expressed appreciation that JFF's assessment tool and structured process, with its focus on equity and grantee need and impact, supported the growth and development of CWDB staff and will serve as a model for future CWDB application decision-making. CWDB also engaged in discussions during SPR's sense-making sessions, where the evaluator shared grantee feedback on challenges in administering public funds, providing CWDB with insights for reflection and improvement.

Field-Building Conversations

Throughout the project, JFF shared insights from HRTF with philanthropic funders, workforce practitioners, and public-sector leaders, highlighting key lessons learned. Through presentations at conferences such as the California Workforce Association's WorkCon event, JFF's Horizons Summit, and the Asset Funders Network conference, JFF showcased the benefits of the public-private partnership model and advocated for the importance of flexible funding.

Recommendations for Future Public- Private Partnerships

05



Diversify Funder Outreach Strategies

Identify regional philanthropic networks that align with underserved areas to ensure geographic diversity in funding.

Collaborate with community foundations and local economic development organizations to tap into region-specific funding sources.

Secure committed “anchor” philanthropic partners with strong networks and sector expertise to lead fundraising efforts.

Empower these anchor funders to initiate peer-to-peer outreach to expand investment contributions.



Promote Flexible Funding Models

Clearly articulate the benefits and impact of flexible, pooled funds through case studies and success stories

Design clear accountability measures to assure funders that flexible contributions are aligned with strategic workforce outcomes

Establish tailored engagement strategies to align funders' priorities with the broader High Road vision, ensuring diverse funding streams



Build a Flexible Fund Management Structure

Design a governance model that prioritizes adaptability while ensuring that key responsibilities remain clear

Establish a structured transition plan for leadership roles to ensure continuity in fund management

Identify and cultivate emerging leaders within partner organizations who can step into leadership roles as needed and ensure smooth transitions during leadership changes



Enhance Collaboration and Institutionalize Partnership With State Agencies

Create formal partnership agreements through a memorandum of understanding or a similar agreement during the planning and design phase.

Include contingency planning in the agreement to mitigate challenges related to leadership turnover, ensuring the partnership's sustainability.

Establish regular check-ins with philanthropic partners, grantees, and state agencies to maintain alignment.

Develop joint messaging that emphasizes the long-term value of H RTPs, positioning them as essential workforce solutions to secure future investment.

Appendix

HRTF Grantee Profiles

CENTER FOR CAREGIVER ADVANCEMENT (CCA)

MISSION

To build the workforce of caregivers that many Californians can't live without.

HRTF PROJECTS

CNA to LVN apprenticeship program and an upskilling program for IHSS Workers in San Bernardino County

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ Registered Apprenticeship Programs
- ▶ Upskilling IHSS Workers
- ▶ Equity-centered training approach

Objectives and Overview

CCA's HRTFs aim to increase job quality and advance economic, occupational, gender, and racial equity efforts. CCA provides caregivers with opportunities for specialized training and on-the-job experience. CCA's training approach addresses barriers to participation by offering training in multiple languages, payment for time in class, a stipend upon completion, and retention activities that support course completion.

- The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) to Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) Apprenticeship Program HRTF expands CCA's existing Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) registered apprenticeship program and develops the CNA to LVN apprenticeship program.
- The Upskilling IHSS Workers in San Bernardino County HRTF addresses the need for qualified and experienced in-home support service (IHSS) caregivers through multi-week, competency-based training experiences that include a 30-hour IHSS Essentials course and two 15-hour specialized training programs on Caregiver Resiliency Teams (CRT) and Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (ADRD).

CENTER FOR CAREGIVER ADVANCEMENT (CCA)

Use of HRTF Funds

CCA contracted with Vital Research to assist with the development of data dashboards. The focus of the dashboards was to highlight the outcomes of its ADRD and CRT programs. Funding supported internal staff time associated with creating the dashboards, as well as training on Tableau functionality and data visualization best practices. CCA also allocated HRTF funds to hire a new director-level staff person.

Impact of HRTF

CCA developed its internal staffing, expertise, and capacity around data systems, which will allow the organization to track participant outcomes and demonstrate the impact of the HRTF programs. CCA enrolled 200 apprentices, and as of December 2024, 123 of them had successfully completed the program and 52 had obtained jobs as CNAs. Additionally, six apprentices enrolled in the LVN track and are expected to complete training near the end of 2025.

Project Target Populations

Women of all backgrounds, people of color, immigrants, English language learners, and people with low incomes

Project Partnerships

- Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at MIT
- Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP)
- Pursue Health
- San Bernardino County Public Authority
- SEIU Local 2015
- Sun Mar Healthcare
- University of California at San Francisco Institute for Health and Aging
- Vital Research

CENTER FOR CAREGIVER ADVANCEMENT (CCA)

Participant Success Story

Apprentices enrolled in the CNA to LVN Registered Apprenticeship Program, supported by the HRTF initiative of the California Workforce Development Board, which creates a pathway for career advancement for nursing home workers while providing a solution to the staffing crisis at skilled nursing facilities. CCA covers the cost of tuition and related training expenses and provides stipends for participants to use on necessities, including child care, transportation, and groceries. One of the program's graduates (pictured below) secured employment as a CNA at College Vista Post-Acute in Los Angeles upon passing her state exams. To read more caregiver stories and learn about CCA's impact visit <https://advancecaregivers.org/ourimpact>

Participant Quote

“ *I don't think it would have been possible if I did not have this program. I have a daughter at home, so financial stability was always a top priority for me. . . . I didn't have to worry about one thing or another. I could completely focus on just getting my studying done.*



Connect with CCA

Corinne Eldridge,
President/CEO

corinne@advancecaregivers.org

<https://advancecaregivers.org>



Partnership for a Better San Diego

MISSION

To provide training and services that prepare workers for High Road jobs where they can earn middle-class wages and build careers with unionized employers.

HRTF PROJECT

San Diego Hospitality Alternative Staffing Agency

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ On-the-job Training
- ▶ Classroom Component
- ▶ Case Management

Objectives and Overview

- The San Diego Hospitality Alternative Staffing Agency (ASA) supports low-barrier entry into hospitality work, with a strong focus on union careers and long-term sustainability in the industry.
- The San Diego Hospitality ASA transforms the hospitality industry by providing a union-modeled hiring hall for hospitality workers in San Diego County. ASA hires workers to meet employers' flexible staffing needs while offering employees living wage jobs.
- The Hospitality Training Program provides industry-certified training for career advancement and offers on-the-job training at unionized hotel partners. The San Diego College of Continuing Education provides classroom training, and participants receive case management to overcome barriers they may face during training and early employment.
- The sustainability plan for the hospitality program is built on securing funding from a wide array of sources to ensure long-term viability.

Partnership for a Better San Diego

Use of HRTF Funds

HRTF funding enabled the Partnership for a Better San Diego (PBSD) to provide training to five cohorts. It covered the costs of instructors, classroom rental, training materials and food handler’s certification fees, case manager wages, supportive services, and participant wages during the three-week training program.

Impact of HRTF

Overall Participants Served: In 2024, a total of 72 people were enrolled in training. Of those, 45 participants successfully completed training, and 24 of them were offered employment by the hotel where they were trained. An additional nine participants obtained employment in other industries.

Project Target Populations

Immigrants, refugees, people returning to their communities following incarceration, former foster youth, people experiencing housing insecurity, and people who receive public assistance benefits.

Project Partnerships

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| • San Diego College of Continuing Education | • Jewish Family Services | • Loews Coronado Bay Resort |
| • San Diego Workforce Partnership | • Lucky Duck Foundation | • The Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter |
| • International Rescue Committee | • San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council | • Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel |
| • Public Consulting Group | • Unite Here Local 30 | • Hyatt Mission Bay |
| • CoreCivic | • Hotel Del Coronado | • Kona Kai San Diego Resort |
| • South Bay Community Services | • Humphreys Half Moon Inn & Suites | • The Westin InterContinental |

Partnership for a Better San Diego

Participant Success Story

In March 2024, a participant was referred to the San Diego Hospitality Alternative Staffing Agency (ASA) by the mayor of San Diego. She was a Haitian refugee who had recently relocated with her family to Southeast San Diego. In January 2024, heavy rains and flooding destroyed her home, leaving her displaced once again. She was unemployed at the time. Although ASA's March cohort of trainees was already full, they accepted her into the program due to the urgency of her situation. She was then assigned to Hyatt Regency Mission Bay for on-the-job training. During her first week of training, she faced challenges, and the HR managers were uncertain about her future at the hotel. However, she turned things around during her second week of training. She was then offered a position at the hotel, where she works to this day.

Participant Quote

“

*We were getting paid to do this [training], so it's great.
You learn from professionals.*

— Fabian Lopez,
InterContinental San Diego Hotel



Connect with PBSO

Gina Lee,
Director of Staffing and Programs

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El Sol Neighborhood Educational Resource Center (El Sol)

MISSION

To empower members of vulnerable communities to lead healthy lives with access to health care, safe and affordable housing, opportunities for education, and the leadership skills to expand opportunities.

HRTF PROJECT

Community Health Worker Career Accelerator and Advancement Pathways Initiative (CHW-CAAPI)

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ Career pathway opportunities
- ▶ Customized training curriculum
- ▶ Community-centered approach

Objectives and Overview

The goal of El Sol's CHW-CAAPI program is to empower the community health worker/promotor (CHW/P) workforce while fostering regional collaboration and establishing scalable career pathways.

Community health workers and community health promoters are trusted community leaders and agents of change whose backgrounds are similar to those of the people in the communities they serve. The HRTF initiative builds opportunities for growth and learning so members of the CHW/P workforce are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for various roles in the CHW/P profession, such as leadership, evaluation, training and development, and policy and advocacy positions. The initiative also strengthens career pathway and advancement opportunities through specialized training and curricula using popular education methods, opportunities to apply and expand skills, and career advancement guides that include core competencies, average salaries, and training recommendations.

El Sol Neighborhood Educational Resource Center

Use of HRTF Funds

El Sol used funds to acquire and design a learning management system (LMS) for its Community Health Worker Learning Hub, which CHW/P workers can use to access training materials and share resources. The Learning Hub was designed to promote continuous, flexible learning for personal and professional development. The funding allowed El Sol to conduct regional and statewide workshops to upskill CHW/P professionals. HRTF funds also supported El Sol's operational expenses and strategic planning efforts related to capacity building and long-term sustainability.

Impact of HRTF

- Infrastructure development (LMS and CHW Learning Hub) and upgrades needed to support CHW/P training, advancement, and growth.
- Enhanced CHW/P knowledge and skills through regional and statewide programming.
- Strategy development for long-term organizational sustainability.

Project Target Populations

English language learners; people experiencing housing insecurity; people with records of arrest, conviction, or incarceration; people from low-income backgrounds; residents of rural communities; immigrants; women of all backgrounds; and young people up to age 24.

Project Partnerships

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Health Institute• San Bernardino County Medical Society• Arrowhead Regional Medical Center• Loma Linda University• National Association of Community Health Workers• Inland Empire Community Collaborative | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Riverside and San Bernardino County Department of Public Health and Behavioral/Mental Health• Inland Intercultural Health Equity Coalition• San Bernardino Workforce Development Board• Riverside Workforce Development Board |
|--|--|

El Sol Neighborhood Educational Resource Center

Participant Success Story

A CHW/P professional who participated in El Sol's trainings said that while she had already been serving her community, she was not aware that she was doing the work of a CHW/P. The trainings helped her grow as a CHW/P and strengthen her role as a bridge connecting her community to resources. She attributes her personal and professional development to the training and support she received through El Sol.

Participant Quote

“*Thanks to the training at El Sol as a promotora, I learned to do what I knew as a professional and how to make it more simple so that the community can understand the importance of taking care of their general health.*”

— CHW/P Professional



Connect with El Sol

Alex Fajardo,
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The Miguel Contreras Foundation

MISSION

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization on a mission to empower working Angelenos—especially immigrants, people of color, and women of all backgrounds—by advancing access to quality jobs and livable communities.

HRTF PROJECT

High Road to Electric Vehicles in Los Angeles County

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ 12-week in-person training
- ▶ Industry recognized credentials
- ▶ Industry-connected instructors

Objectives and Overview

- Refine the initial HRTF to become a multi-employer and multi-college program focused on electric vehicles.
- Build infrastructure and organizational capacity to continue the development of the program.

The Miguel Contreras Foundation supports a comprehensive electric vehicle technology training program, offering a 12-week course covering electrical safety awareness that leads to OSHA 10 and ASE EV 1 and 2 high-voltage electrical safety certifications. Operated at Charter Oak Adult Education in Covina, the program primarily serves youth ages 18-24. Supportive services are provided by Pomona Valley AJCC, which is operated by Managed Career Solutions and conveniently co-located on the Charter Oak campus. This initiative aims to provide participants with exposure to a range of energy-related jobs and foundational skills applicable for work on various electric vehicles, including bikes, forklifts, cars, trucks, and buses. Initially started as a High Road to Electric Bus Manufacturing HRTF through the USW-Proterra Training and Apprenticeship Trust, the program's original focus on electric bus manufacturing helped lay the groundwork for its current broader scope within the e-vehicle sector.

The Miguel Contreras Foundation

Use of HRTF Funds

HRTF funding has allowed the Miguel Contreras Foundation to continue support to a program manager position, which has focused on the ongoing development of the program from its initial emphasis on electric bus manufacturing to a broader scope encompassing various electric vehicle technologies. Additionally, the funding supports the delivery and capacity of the training program, while supportive services are further bolstered by leveraged WIOA funds provided by the Los Angeles County AJCC.

Impact of HRTF

Cohort Success: In its first cohort, the program enrolled 25 participants and 22 (88%) successfully completed the program.

Young Adult Participants: A significant portion (44%) of the first cohort were between the ages of 18-24, aligning well with the program's goal of providing opportunities for youth and young adults.

Project Target Populations

Young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are disconnected from school and work; people experiencing housing insecurity; people with records of arrest, conviction, or incarceration; people from low-income backgrounds; veterans; and women of all backgrounds.

Project Partnerships

- Charter Oak Adult Education
- Managed Career Solutions – Pomona Valley AJCC
- MY Workforce Solutions LLC
- Obed Mejia, Senior Bus Equipment Maintenance Instructor, Los Angeles Metro

The Miguel Contreras Foundation

Participant Success Story

Jesus joined the High Road to Electric Vehicle training program to gain hands-on experience and knowledge. As a participant, he interned with MCF Industry Coordinator Manny Meza at Evolectric Inc., a Compton-based company that focuses on EV truck conversions as a way to make zero-emission vehicles more accessible. Impressed by Jesus' aptitude, Meza suggested he consider attending college to further develop his skills. However, Jesus has a different vision for his future—one fueled by a passion for learning and growing through practical training and work experience. He exemplifies the power of pathways to success that don't include college, proving that determination and hands-on experience can pave the way for a fulfilling career.

Participant Quote

“

[I would recommend the class.] It's good skills to have as more EVs become mainstream.

— Jesus, a Miguel Contreras Foundation Trainee



Connect with MCF

Michelle Yanez,
PM Consultant

Armando Loza,
MCF Executive Director

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The Empowerment Center

MISSION

To help young people and families develop the resilience necessary to overcome challenges, discover the best of themselves, and create healthier, happier patterns of living.

HRTF PROJECT

Mental Health Community Health Worker
Training

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ 12-week virtual training
- ▶ Industry-recognized credentials
- ▶ Wraparound services

Objectives and Overview

- Address the shortage of mental health professionals in the Inland Empire, the region of California with the highest need for mental health services.
- Connect members of populations with limited access to resources with opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials and prepare for family-supporting careers in the health care, education, and community-based sectors.

The Empowerment Center's (TEC) Mental Health Community Health Worker (CHW) Project, which is funded by both a California Workforce Development Board High Road Training Partnership (HRTF) grant and HRTF, is designed to build a resilient workforce by training and deploying frontline mental health professionals and paraprofessionals. The project provides entry-level workers with an accelerated 12-week CHW training that covers competencies in essential areas, including trauma-informed care, and leads to an industry-recognized certificate of completion. Program participants who are master's degree mental health students and graduates have opportunities to gain the supervised clinical hours needed to become licensed clinicians. Sustainability efforts include braiding funding and holding monthly meetings through TEC's Multi-Sector Roundtables for Workforce Development to connect stakeholders from various sectors and give them opportunities to build skills, find jobs, and forge alliances of support that remove barriers to self-sufficiency.

The Empowerment Center



Use of HRTF Funds

HRTF funding provided TEC with seed capital for facility expansion and funding for services to remove barriers for participants in the CHW workforce training program. These wraparound services include mental health supports, housing assistance, and program training stipends.

Impact of HRTF

- Overall Participants Served:** Total participants grew from 74 in 2023 to 121 in 2024 (an increase of 63.51%).
- Low-Income Participants:** The number of participants from low-income backgrounds more than doubled, increasing from 28 in November 2023 to 61 in November 2024 (an increase of approximately 117.9%).

Project Target Populations

Young people ages 16 to 24; current and former foster care youth; single moms; members of indigenous/tribal communities; people of color; veterans; Registered Apprentices; people with records of arrest, conviction, or incarceration; unemployed workers; people with disabilities; people experiencing housing insecurity.

Project Partnerships

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| • Temecula Valley Unified School District | • Youth Action Project (YAP) | • Temecula Valley Hospital |
| • California Community Health Worker Community of Practice (CCHWCP) | • Loma Linda University Health | • Yolo County Office of Education |
| • San Bernardino Valley College | • Loyola Marymount University | • Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy |
| • Mt. San Jacinto Community College | • LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network | • Network Kinection |
| | • San Bernardino Workforce Development Board | • Moreno Valley College |

The Empowerment Center

Participant Success Story

Through her participation in the Mental Health Community Health Worker training program, one participant embarked on a transformative journey. As she engaged in the program, she accessed wraparound services, like clinical support, to address the trauma she had suffered and ultimately transitioned herself from an unhealthy reliance on medication. The program opened new doors to new opportunities, leading her to secure employment at an attorney's office providing virtual legal assistance. This transformative shift helped her to progress from jobs that paid about \$8 an hour to a role that pays \$20 an hour in her new career pathway.

Participant Quote

“

*This [Mental Health CHW] class literally changed how I see the world.
And how I see me, in the world.”*

— Participant Comment on Facebook



Connect with TEC

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LCSW, TEC Executive Director

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MISSION

To connect workers to good, stable and permanent jobs, by providing and promoting the highest quality of workforce development.

HRTF PROJECT

Providing training for the Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment (PLACE) program

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ Classroom and on-the-job training
- ▶ Civil service exam preparation
- ▶ Case management and retention support

Objectives and Overview

- The Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC) prepares and places people facing barriers to employment into entry-level permanent jobs in the Los Angeles County government via the Los Angeles Department of Economic Opportunity's Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment (PLACE) program.

WERC is a training provider for DEO's PLACE program. Through this program, WERC connects LA County residents to training and LA County employment opportunities. This assistance includes providing participants with technical, work readiness, and on-the-job training; assisting them with applying for county jobs and passing required civil service examinations; and helping them to prepare for county job interviews. Through PLACE, WERC also provides program participants with case management during training and the first six months of employment. The PLACE program has helped people find jobs in numerous county positions, including as case managers, custodians, clerks, laborers, community health workers, and emergency medical technicians.

Worker Education and Resource Center

Use of HRTF Funds

HRTF funding enabled WERC to improve its office infrastructure, cover recruiting costs, help support its finance/HR director, and pay for staff to attend several conferences. The office infrastructure improvements included office wiring upgrades, the purchase and installation of new cubicle partitions and office furniture to accommodate new staff, and the development of a ticketing system for dealing with IT issues.

Impact of HRTF

Participants Served: Between 2023 and 2024, WERC trained more than 80 unemployed workers in five PLACE training cohorts.

Increased Staffing and Awareness of WERC: WERC created the new position of office manager and HR generalist and produced a five-minute video promoting the organization.

Project Target Populations

Young people transitioning to adulthood; former foster care youth; people with low incomes from communities with high unemployment; people experiencing housing insecurity; people with records of arrest, conviction, or incarceration; LGBTQ+ people; and women of all backgrounds.

Project Partnerships

- LA County, including the departments of Health Services, Mental Health, and Economic Opportunity
- Jobs to Move America (JMA)
- Build Your Dreams (BYD)
- The Education Fund
- SEIU Local 721
- Amity Foundation
- Center for Living and Learning
- Ballmer Group
- The California Endowment
- Northeast Valley Health Corporation
- United Way
- Esperanza Community Housing Corp.
- The Wellness Center
- California Mental Health Services Authority
- International Association of Sheet Metal Air, Rail, and Transportation (SMART)Workers, Local 105
- St John's Well Child and Family Center
- LA Care Health Plan
- Antelope Valley Partners for Health
- Kaiser Permanente
- McCormick Ambulance Service
- LA County Stentorians
- Pasadena City College
- Charles R. Drew University
- Community Career Development Inc.
- WorkSource California
- Boston Reed
- LA Southwest and Valley Colleges

Worker Education and Resource Center

Participant Success Story

A participant in WERC's Community Health Worker (CHW) training program described how she had grown up in a low-income family in South Central Los Angeles, had a son, and then was shot by a young woman in a gang initiation. After going through intensive physical therapy, she heard about the program through a friend and decided to apply. After completing the training, she found a job as a CHW at an LA County comprehensive health center in her community, and she says she "loves" this new role.

Participant Quote

“

I feel very happy to be part of the Community Care Program [for an LA County comprehensive health center]. It has a phenomenal purpose.

— WERC CHW training program graduate



Connect with WERC

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WERC Executive Director

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United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Western States Council WorkForward



MISSION

To provide job skills training for workers in grocery retail, cannabis, and other food-related industries to create quality job pathways.

HRTF PROJECT

UFCW WorkForward Healthcare Expansion

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ Workplace training
- ▶ Worker safety events
- ▶ Increased staff capacity

Objectives and Overview

- To develop and implement new worker safety programs in grocery and retail pharmacy settings.
- To host community and worker safety fairs in partnership with labor and community groups and governmental agencies.
- To increase WorkForward’s administrative and fiscal management staff capacity to support existing and further current and planned program expansion in the greater Los Angeles region

Specifically, UFCW WorkForward implemented two workforce development projects. The first, SB 553 Workplace Violence Prevention, focused on training retail workers on workplace violence prevention. The second, LGBTQ+ Pharmacy Continuing Education Training, was a partnership between UFCW and the California Pharmacists Association (CPhA) to offer a free, self-paced, one-hour continuing education training and certification.

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Western States Council WorkForward

Use of HRTF Funds

With the support of HRTF funds, UFCW WorkForward added administrative and project staff, built greater operational capacity, and gained fiscal flexibility beyond the constraints on the use of state dollars (the ability to pay for reasonable travel costs above GSA limits, training stipends, and accounting and auditing services above HRTF projected budgets, for example). The organization also hired a consultant to input training participant data into CalJOBS for its WIOA 3.0 HRTF grant.

Impact of HRTF

Overall Participants Served: 24 people were served in 2024.

Placed in Employment: 71 people have been placed in jobs in Los Angeles.

Project Target Populations

Women of all backgrounds, workers who are unemployed or under-employed, English language learners, and people with low incomes.

Project Partnerships

- California Pharmacists Association
- United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) locals 5, 135, 324, 1167, and 1428
- MSH Consulting

Connect with UFCW WorkForward

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MISSION

To improve the skills of the hospitality, food service and tourism workforce by providing quality apprenticeship programs and training to help current workers advance and prepare people from underserved communities for employment while addressing regional workforce needs.

HRTF PROJECT

Culinary Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

KEY STRATEGIES

- ▶ Apprenticeship programs and other training
- ▶ Case management
- ▶ Recruitment and outreach

Objectives and Overview

- Build organizational capacity to provide culinary career training to young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are disconnected from work and learning (a population sometimes called opportunity youth).

HTA's culinary training programs, funded by both a CWDB and HRTF grant and HRTF, aim to build their community presence and strengthen their internal capacity to promote their culinary programs to opportunity youth in Los Angeles and Orange counties. HTA offers Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards. These include eight-week Registered Apprenticeships for line cook, chef de partie, barista/latte artist, and bartending/mixology roles and a five-week pre-apprenticeship for prep cooks. The programs employ dedicated staff members who help participants overcome barriers and address other needs. The success of the initial HRTF opportunity youth program and ongoing collaboration with local organizations, community partners, and funders help ensure the continued sustainability of the projects.

Hospitality Training Academy

Use of HRTF Funds

HRTF funding enabled HTA to recruit and hire outreach staff, design a marketing and communications plan, and increase efforts to successfully enroll opportunity youth in both an eight-week line cook Registered Apprenticeship program and an 18-day prep cook pre-apprenticeship. The organization also contracted a communications consultant and a media consultant to assist with developing and enhancing communications to and for young people via media buys and flyers, ads, and other outreach materials.

Impact of HRTF

Overall Participants Served: Of 95 opportunity youth leads generated from HTA outreach, 50 young people enrolled in the program, 44 successfully completed their training, and 36 obtained high-road employment with sustainable wages and benefits.

Increased Community Presence: HTA hired a director of special projects, an outreach specialist, and an outreach manager. As a result, the organization was able to increase the number of community events it held from one to 120 in 2023.

Project Target Populations

Opportunity youth in Los Angeles and Orange counties who are from low-income backgrounds, have criminal records, are experiencing housing insecurity, are immigrants, or identify as transgender.

Project Partnerships

- UNITE HERE Local 11
- UFCW Local 770
- Los Angeles County Federation of Labor
- 170+ employers, including the Ritz-Carlton and JW Marriott, Los Angeles; the Beverly Hilton, HMSHost; and Levy Restaurants at Dodger Stadium
- South Bay Workforce Development Board
- The Los Angeles county and city workforce development boards
- Playa Vista
- Downtown Women's Center
- REDF
- Alameda Central Labor Council
- Los Angeles County Federation of Labor
- East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy
- UC Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program
- Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
- UCLA Labor Occupational Safety Program Cal/OSHA
- City of Oakland
- TransLatin@ Coalition
- Archdiocesean Youth Employment Services
- Faith and Community Empowerment
- Earvin "Magic" Johnson Recreation Area
- Michelle and Barack Obama Sports Complex
- Boys and Girls Clubs

Hospitality Training Academy

Participant Success Story

A young person who had dropped out of high school in Grade 10 and had little work experience enrolled in HTA's Prep Cook Training pre-apprenticeship program. With support from HTA case management staff, he earned a Food Handler's certification and another industry-recognized certificate. He received advice on resume writing and interviewing, other supportive services, and a training stipend. After completing the program, he landed a job at the Beverly Hilton, where he started at \$15.50 per hour and got a raise to \$19 per hour after three months.

Participant Quote

“

I love working with people and learning new techniques. I ask a lot of questions and jump right in to try innovative things.

— Participant in HTA's Line Cook
Registered Apprenticeship program



Connect with HTA

Adrineh Terantonians,
Director of Workforce Systems

Stephanie Koontz,
Director of Quality, Learning, and Compliance

www.lahta.org



JFF