



COVID-19 Recovery Centers*

The COVID-19 Recovery Centers are promoting health, safety, and recovery training for essential workers and communities impacted by high rates of COVID-19. The centers are supported by funding under the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020

February 2022

Summary

The NIEHS Worker Training Program (WTP) funded supplemental grants under [NIH NOT-ES-21-002](#), “Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Promoting Health, Safety, and Recovery Training for COVID-19 Essential Workers and their Communities,” with support from the [Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020](#). Grantee organizations are leading centers across the nation and will partner with local businesses and community organizations to assess COVID-19 health risks, train essential workers, and coordinate resources needed to reduce disease transmission and promote recovery in disadvantaged communities.

Visit the NIEHS Environmental Factor newsletter article, “[COVID-19 resilience and recovery for workers, communities](#),” for more information.

NIEHS WTP has funded a total of \$1,975,878 in supplemental grants for COVID-19 recovery center activities. One grantee organization is initiating recovery center activities under their parent [Hazardous Waste Worker Health and Safety Training](#) cooperative agreement grant. Summaries of all grants and their activities are listed below.

NIEHS WTP Homepage (www.niehs.nih.gov/wtp)

NIEHS WTP Coronavirus/COVID-19 Resource Page (<https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/covid19worker/>)

* In October 2021, the Recovery Center grantees presented an update on their activities. Those updates appear in the following tables in a column labeled “Activites Update (February 2022)”. A [recording is available](#), and the slides are on the [meeting web page](#).

Grant Number	PI Name(s)	Institution	Summary	Activities Update (February 2022)
U45ES019360-11S3	Janelle Rios and Robert Emery	University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	<p>The Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (P2R) Consortium, located at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health, will deliver actionable, site-specific training in COVID-19 mitigation strategies to vulnerable populations in the El Paso, Texas area. To achieve this objective, the P2R Consortium will work with local partners at the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, El Paso Water, and University Medical Center of El Paso to identify resource and training needs and to fulfill the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and refine a COVID-19 risk profile tool that will calculate a site-specific risk profile for workers by job classification and task. • Create an individual and actionable SARS-CoV-2 transmission mitigation plan in English and Spanish. Business owners will be full partners in developing the mitigation plan. • Deliver high quality, culturally appropriate training and resources to mitigate the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the workplace. The project team will focus on supporting business owners to effectively implement the mitigation plan at the worksite. 	<p>P2R has been working on multiple activities, particularly the refinement and deployment of a tailored risk profile tool. The goal is the refinement of preliminary hazard classification, on-site assessment of risk, and the development of a tailored assessment tool. The tool uses an innovative approach of merging the occupational risk pyramid for COVID-19, the Occupational Information Network (O*NET), and the hierarchy of controls.</p>

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<p>U45ES006172-29S2 U45 ES006172-30S1</p>	<p>David Turcotte</p>	<p>University of Massachusetts Lowell</p>	<p>The New England Consortium-Civil Service Employees Association (TNEC-CSEA) is a worker health and safety training partnership directed by the University of Massachusetts Lowell. TNEC-CSEA will establish two recovery centers: one recovery center in Connecticut as a partnership between ConnectiCOSH and the Naugatuck Valley Project and another recovery center in Massachusetts, led by MassCOSH in partnership with community organizations in East Boston, Dorchester, Brockton, and New Bedford. Led by TNEC-CSEA, the centers will support COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, infectious disease control, training and education, legal support, employment assistance, and housing assistance. Specific activities under the two centers will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide health and safety education and training on COVID-19. • Develop science-based, culturally specific training and resources for high-risk workers in environmental justice communities and immigrant communities. • Serve as a clearinghouse creating multi-lingual educational materials in English, Spanish, Portuguese Creole, Albanian, and French Creole. • Educate workers and communities about vaccination. • Establish protocols for infection control for community partners. • Partner with local public health agencies and employers to connect individuals to resources such as testing, contact tracing, infection control, mental health counseling, and peer support. • Provide connections to job training and employment. • Make referrals to social services, food, and emergency housing. 	<p>TNEC's Recovery Centers have been in Connecticut and Massachusetts to support essential workers with education, training, and social support. Other efforts include COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, infectious disease control, procurement of PPE, legal support, employment, housing, and food assistance. There has been a focus to provide resources to workers in environmental justice and immigrant communities including multilingual fact sheets and town halls.</p>

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<p>U45ES006179-29S2 U45ES006179-30S1</p>	<p>Mitchel Rosen</p>	<p>Rutgers School of Public Health</p>	<p>The Atlantic Center for Occupational Health and Safety will provide essential training and outreach in response to the Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19) pandemic. Utilizing a broad-based approach, the center will target various populations to provide training and outreach to increase the knowledge and skills of vulnerable and essential workers in New Jersey, New York, and Puerto Rico. Rutgers School of Public Health will lead this effort. The project's overall aims include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent and reduce Coronavirus exposure for essential workers who are at risk through their work duties. • Connect community members to resources and services to prevent Coronavirus exposure, increase access to testing, and provide vaccination information. • Improve knowledge and practices regarding the use of personal protective equipment and other risk reduction strategies during mass testing and vaccination events. • Increase knowledge of workplace Coronavirus exposure and strategies to educate other workers about occupational exposure. The center will identify trainers who can deliver courses in multiple languages, including Spanish and other regionally-relevant languages. 	<p>The Atlantic Center has created new partnerships and reached new audiences, such as the Hispanic and Latino Community, the Haitian community in the west and south ward in Newark, vulnerable populations throughout New Jersey, school staff, contact tracers, business and school inspectors, food pantry volunteers, and navigators who work with immigrant communities throughout New York State. An example was reaching the Haitian community for training and outreach activities, including providing translated materials, discussing vaccine myths on a local Haitian radio show, partnering with local businesses to incentivize vaccinations, and partnering with groups who administer vaccines.</p>

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<p>U45ES032171-01S2 U45ES032171-02S1</p>	<p>David Cassavant</p>	<p>Sustainable Workplace Alliance, Inc.</p>	<p>The Sustainable Workplace Alliance (SWA) will conduct training and outreach designed to assist participants in making effective decisions which will result in a reduction of Coronavirus exposure and transmission. Training will focus on both at-risk citizens (youth and the elderly) and essential workers, including frontline health care workers, first responders, business operations workers, transportation sector workers, environmental cleanup workers, and water and sewage treatment workers. Outreach activities will include collateral services such as mental health counseling and referrals for employment opportunities, social services, childcare, food distribution, and emergency housing. SWA will target disproportionately affected communities in Puerto Rico and Florida with a specific focus on communities with higher-than-average COVID-19 transmission rates. Under this project, SWA expects to provide COVID training and outreach to a minimum of 3,675 citizens and essential workers. This project will evaluate and determine the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How SWA community-based partnerships helped with recovery during a pandemic. • What hurdles exist in assisting citizens during a disaster, including a pandemic. • How effective SWA outreach was to essential workers and their employers. • What are best practices during a disaster and response. • How social leaders influence pandemic mitigation steps. 	<p>In Florida, SWA's Recovery Center has worked with partners to deliver COVID-19 awareness training, as well as supporting activities around vaccine counseling, job and career development referrals, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, mental health counseling, and referrals for social services, such as childcare, food distribution, and emergency housing.</p>

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U45ES010664-22S2	Beverly Wright and Robert Bullard	Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Inc.	<p>The Historically Black Colleges/Universities and Communities Consortium is directed by the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice in New Orleans, Louisiana, in partnership with Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas; and in collaboration with five community-based organizations located along the Gulf Coast in five states (Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Texas). The Deep South Center will expand the work of the consortium to include the development of a Gulf Coast COVID-19 Recovery Center to promote health, safety, and recovery training for COVID-19 essential workers and their community. The overall goal of this training program is to assist and facilitate equity in community recovery from the SARS-CoV-2 virus and resulting COVID-19 pandemic, leading to broader acceptance of public health measures in the hardest hit communities. The specific aims of this project include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships for COVID-19 training with community-based organizations representing high risk communities and provide education and awareness training on COVID-19 health risks. • Facilitate access to wraparound service resources for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery through city agencies. • Provide two classes per month on COVID-19 at designated sites in the consortium thereby training approximately 241 residents through 1,868 contact training hours. • Develop monthly YouTube videos presenting COVID-19 cases and an impact analysis for each community. • Conduct train-the-trainer classes for participating community-based organization leaders. 	<p>Deep South has put together three online sessions, one on COVID-19 awareness; a second on vaccines, variants, and understanding the science; and a third on mental health. One example was how they provided COVID-19 training in partnership with a residential cleaning service and disinfection company.</p>

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<p>U45ES006162 (Implementing work under existing funds)</p>	<p>Shari Glines- Allen</p>	<p>International Chemical Workers Union Council</p>	<p>The International Chemical Workers Union Council (ICWUC) is building six COVID-19 recovery centers in diverse geographical areas. To accomplish this, ICWUC will work with local organizations that have strong working relationships with five existing consortium partners. Recovery center activities will take place in Riverside, California; Rochester, New York; Detroit, Michigan; Portland, Oregon; Houston, Texas; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The centers will deliver 204 programs to 2,960 workers and community members for 7,182 contact hours. Partners will take a lead role in working closely with their respective local community organizations to expand their COVID-19 community training. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) will take a lead role in the coordination of training while other partners take the primary role in training delivery. The consortium will deliver a range of disaster resources and curricula that utilize the NIEHS Protect Yourself booklets. To support community training needs for future disaster situations, ICWUC may deliver the English or Spanish Disaster Train-the-Trainer classes and assist with disaster awareness classes at the seven sites. Program classes may also include resiliency awareness, disaster first aid/CPR/AED, and mold awareness, and muck and gut (with the mold curriculum available in Spanish). ICWUC will train new bilingual trainers and further the skills of trainers and partner staff who delivered these programs in the past, using participatory adult education techniques.</p>	<p>ICWUC has reached day laborers with essential resources and training in Texas and Pennsylvania. An example was shared of a day laborer who participated in training from the COVID-19 Recovery Centers. He was empowered to further share resources and discuss training content with peers on topics such as construction hazards and COVID-19 protection.</p>

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U45ES006173-30S1	Kevin Riley	University of California Los Angeles	<p>The Western Region Universities Consortium (WRUC), led by the University of California Los Angeles, will establish a network of COVID-19 resource and recovery centers in the western region of the U.S. The centers have the capacity to meet the critical needs of essential workers and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 through engagement with worker and community organizations that maintain trusted relationships with key target groups. The model will extend much needed resources, training, and technical assistance to these organizations. WRUC will collaborate with the Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health and twelve worker and community organization partners in California, Arizona, and Washington State. These organizations collectively reach a wide diversity of essential workers and COVID-vulnerable communities, including domestic workers and day laborers; home healthcare, nursing home, and residential service workers; restaurant and garment workers; diverse immigrant and refugee communities, and communities of color, many of which are low income and working poor. Recovery center activities will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct outreach and training (both virtual and in-person) to essential workers and COVID-vulnerable communities. • Develop videos and other educational tools on several COVID-related topics. • Provide assistance in accessing COVID testing and vaccines. • Conduct contact tracing activities. • Collaborate with public health agencies. • Provide connections to local resources related to food, housing, job assistance, and domestic violence. 	<p>WRUC has engaged with multiple organizations throughout Los Angeles, Northern California, and Arizona as part of their COVID-19 Recovery Center. The communities reached included essential and frontline workers, day laborers and domestic workers, Latino and indigenous communities, immigrant and refugee communities, African American communities, and the working poor. Some of the activities conducted include mobile vaccine points of distribution; outreach and training on COVID-19 prevention and controls; source and distribution of PPE and COVID-19 safety supplies; referrals to local clinics, testing sites, housing, food banks, and other community resources; and support for community health promoters and volunteers.</p>

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U45ES006175-32S1	Ashlee Fitch	The Steelworkers Charitable and Educational Organization	<p>The Steelworkers Charitable and Educational Organization/Tony Mazzocchi Center (SCEO/TMC), in conjunction with community-based organizations in both the New York/New Jersey metropolitan region and in the Anniston-Oxford metro area in northeastern Alabama, have created new and expanded partnerships to address social disparities that contribute to inequitable rates of COVID-19 disease and death. SCEO/TMC and partner organizations will provide essential COVID-19 information, training, and services to promote local resilience and recovery for low-income Latinx and African American workers and their families and will support ongoing recovery activities through wider dissemination of appropriate public health practices and support services. Recovery center activities will promote community recovery through COVID-19 training interventions and perform educational outreach, material adaption; and expanded coordination with service providers, public health providers, and other emergency support services to extend and deepen reach to underrepresented community members. Recovery centers will also do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance training for on-the-job job safety. • Provide assistance with distribution of personal protective equipment. • Provide infectious disease guidance and referral to testing, medical care, and other essential services. • Continue to build ongoing disaster preparedness. 	<p>The Steelworkers have focused on empowering workers with accurate information to make changes in their workplaces and communities. Training topics have included COVID-19 transmission, protection, and vaccinations. The efforts are helping dispel myths circulating on vaccinations by embedding content into worker rights training.</p>