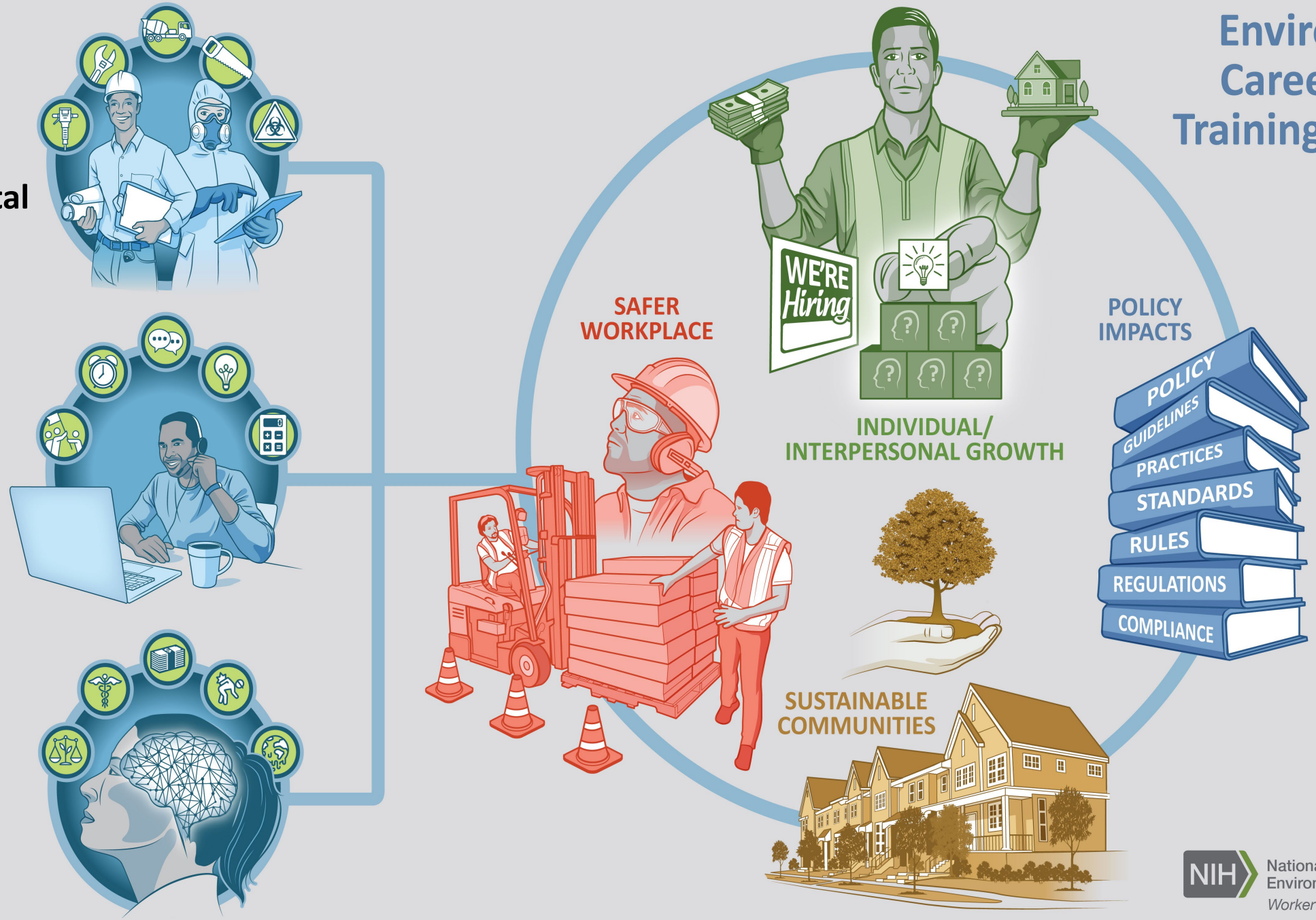
Environmental Career Worker Training Program

NIEHS WTP Justice40 Environmental Justice Stakeholder Engagement Meeting

Oct 19, 2021



National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Worker Training Program

26 Years of Accomplishments for the NIEHS Environmental Career Worker Training Program (ECWTP)

Making a Difference by Addressing Occupational Health Disparities

NIEHS WTP Justice40 Environmental Justice Stakeholder Engagement Meeting – Oct 19, 2021

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National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
Department of Health and Human Services

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Worker Training Program

WTP Uses An All-Hazards Approach for Worker Safety & Health

WTP training courses provide workers and community members with knowledge and skills to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a variety of hazardous exposures.

Workers helping with cleanup following the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. (Photo courtesy of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice)

NIEHS WTP: Preparing Workers for Hazardous Materials & Emergency Response Since 1987

Increase worker safety and health

- Helps businesses and municipalities keep worksites and communities safer
- Trained approximately 3.7 million workers since 1987

Prepare workers for disasters and emergency response

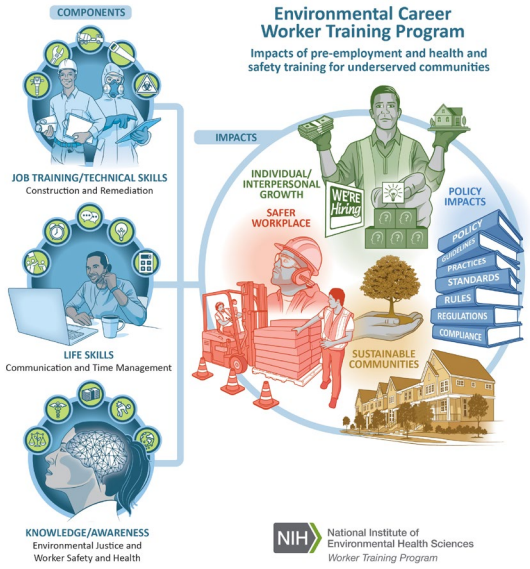
- Trained thousands of workers for recovery in response to natural and man-made disasters, such as: World Trade Centers; western wildfires; Hurricanes Sandy and Harvey; Deepwater Horizon oil spill; and Ebola and COVID-19

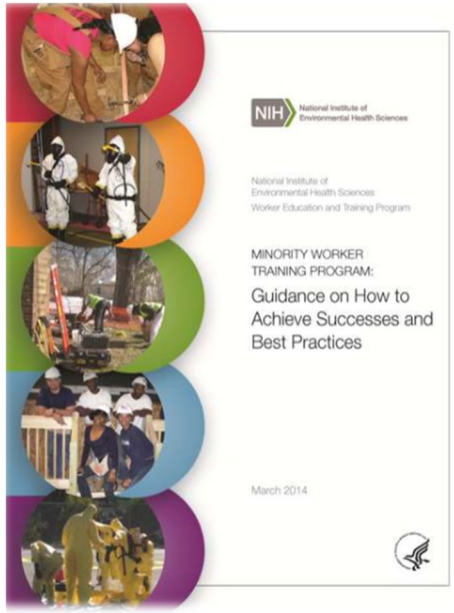
Deliver a job and life skills training program to unemployed or underemployed individuals

- Reached over 13,500 individuals in 30 communities
- Sustained average job placement rate of 70%

WTP Engagement in Environmental Justice

- WTP Training to reach vulnerable populations via outreach, workshop and site-specific training
- Environmental Justice and Hazardous Waste Programs – 15 Years of Investment in Environmental Justice
- Engaged in over 20 Environmental Justice and Health Disparities Conferences
- DOE National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program
- NIEHS/EPA Community and Environmental Justice Conferences – New Orleans, Detroit MI, Alexandria VA
- NIEHS/NIOSH/OSHA Eliminating Health Disparities at Work
- HHS Environmental Justice Working Group
  - Developing EJ Training, Reports on NIEHS Accomplishments on EJ
- HHS Environmental Justice Conferences





WTP grantees have trained thousands of workers in response to many of the worst U.S. natural and man-made disasters, including:

- World Trade Centers: Over 7,000 workers
- Hurricane Katrina: Over 8,500 workers
- Hurricane Sandy: Over 8,000 workers
- Deepwater Horizon Gulf Oil Spill: Over 130,000 workers (in partnership)
- Ebola Infectious Disease Response: Over 7,000 workers
- Harvey/Irma/Maria Hurricanes: Over 5,000 workers
- Hurricanes Florence and Michael: Over 4,000 workers

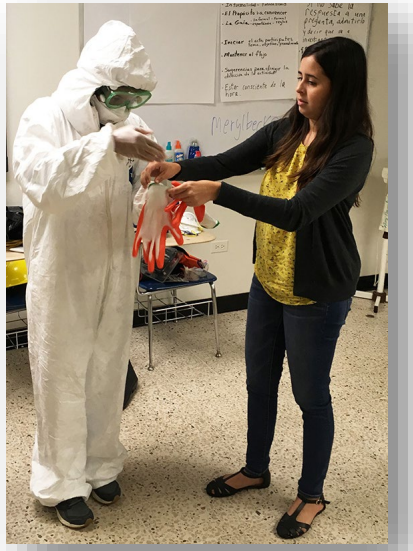
A National Resource in Climate Change-Related Events, Environmental Justice, and Health Emergencies

Wildfires and Mudslides: Training workers on firefighting and other wildfire consequences

Flooding and Hurricanes: Disaster safety training delivered to major US hurricanes

Disaster Relief Act of 2019: Congressional funds obligated for grants and *Environmental Justice, Natural Disasters, & COVID-19 Virtual Town Halls*

Infectious Diseases: Responded to infectious disease events including Ebola and COVID-19

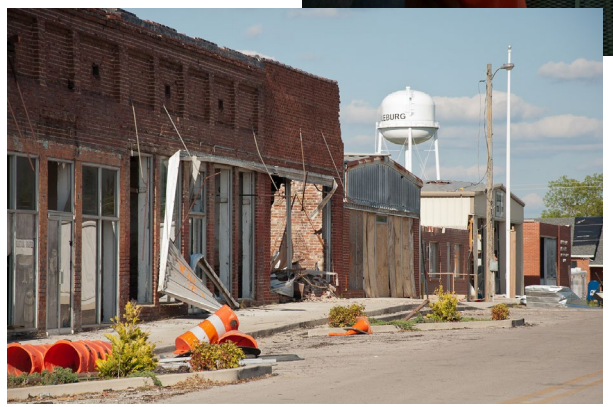


Fact Sheet - Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change and Securing Environmental Justice Through Safety and Health Training
https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/public/hasl_get_blob.cfm?ID=13221

EJ and Natural Disasters Committee

Brings Federal officials together to:

- Assess **major** EJ issues as it relates to natural disasters
- Identify time sensitive solutions to address natural disaster preparedness, response, and recovery in vulnerable, overburdened, and underserved communities
- Ensure that the interests of Federal agencies are addressed, and that appropriate Federal EJ policies, programs, and activities are implemented



Virtual Town Hall Meetings

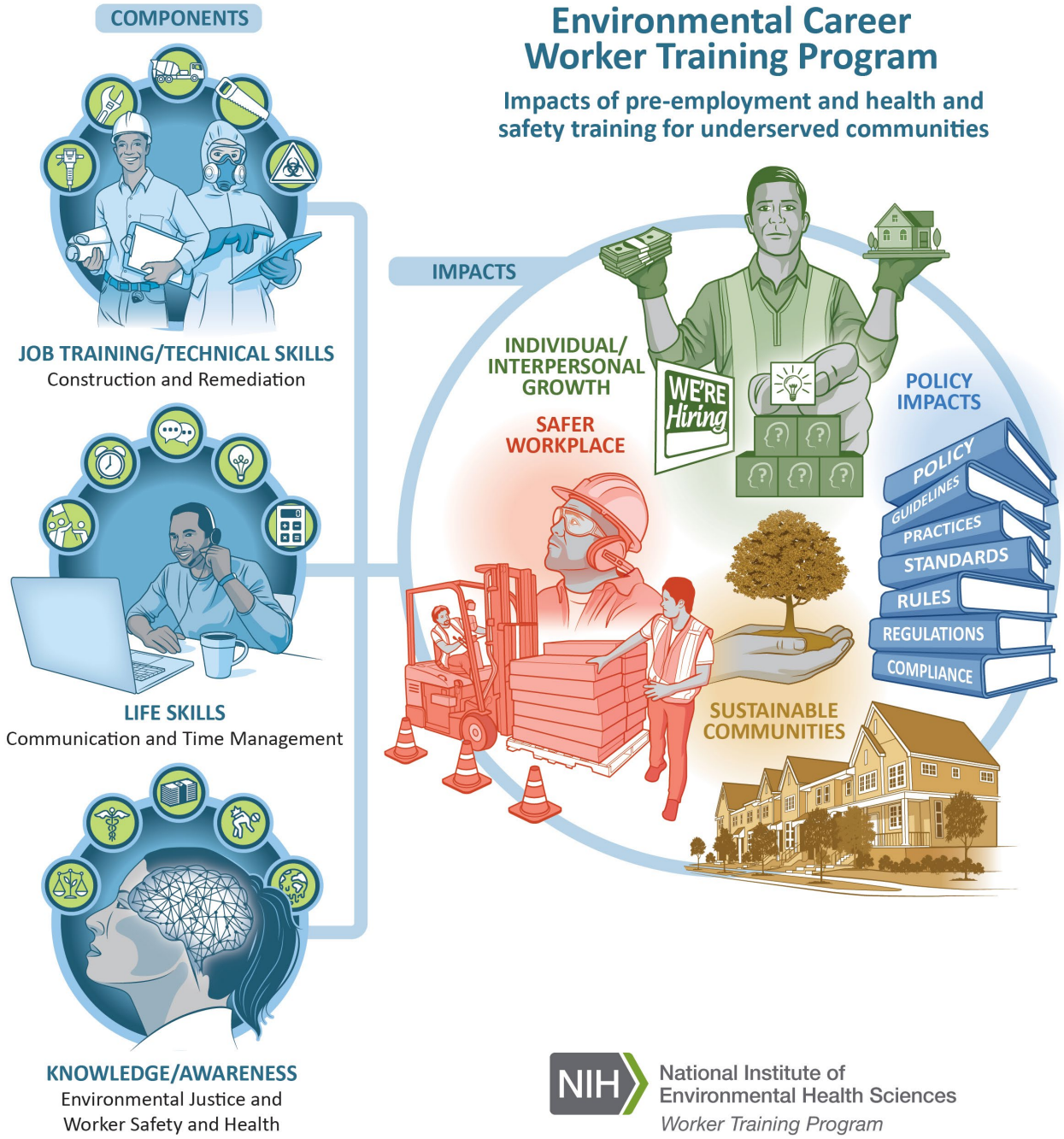
Three Town Hall Meetings were held:

- **Southeast Town Hall Meeting** (including Caribbean Basin, Florida, Georgia, Carolinas) – January 27, 2021
- **Gulf Coast Town Hall Meeting** (including Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi) – February 24, 2021
- **West, Southwest, Rocky Mountains and Plains Region Meeting** (including California, Arizona, Alaska and New Mexico) – March 29, 2021

Post-meetings webpage is now available: https://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/events/pastmtg/hazmat/2021/ej_town_halls/index.cfm

ECWTP Advances Environmental Justice (EJ)

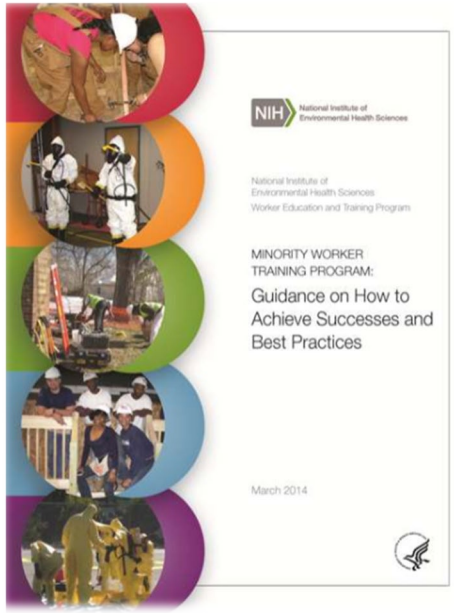
- ECWTP builds careers and changes lives
- Delivers **job/technical and life skills training**, wrap-around **social services**, and **education**
- Produces **individual**, **workplace**, **community**, and **socio-economic policy benefits** to advance EJ and health equity in underserved communities



ECWTP Fact Sheet and 25th Anniversary Website:
https://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/assets/docs/ecwtp_factsheet_2021.pdf
and https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2595

WTP 26 Years of the ECWTP in 2021: Creating Job Opportunities & Changing Lives

- **Success:** Since beginning of program, **approx. 13,500 workers** have been trained with an average **70% employment rate**
- **Locations:** Over 30 communities trained with 200 different CBOs
- **Current Programs:** Six grantees working with 25 different CBO's
  - **2020:** 455 individuals training with 255 employed at a **59% job placement rate. *Note - The COVID-19 pandemic impacted training.**
  - **2019**: 644 individuals trained with 497 obtaining jobs for a 77% job placement rate. Offered 303 courses across all programs
  - **2018:** 569 trained, 423 employed for a 74% job placement rate
  - **Takeaways:** **Changing Lives & Building Careers for a Lifetime**
  - **Training Best Practices:** Extensive life skills, mentoring, numerous technical training and certificates and career options for graduates

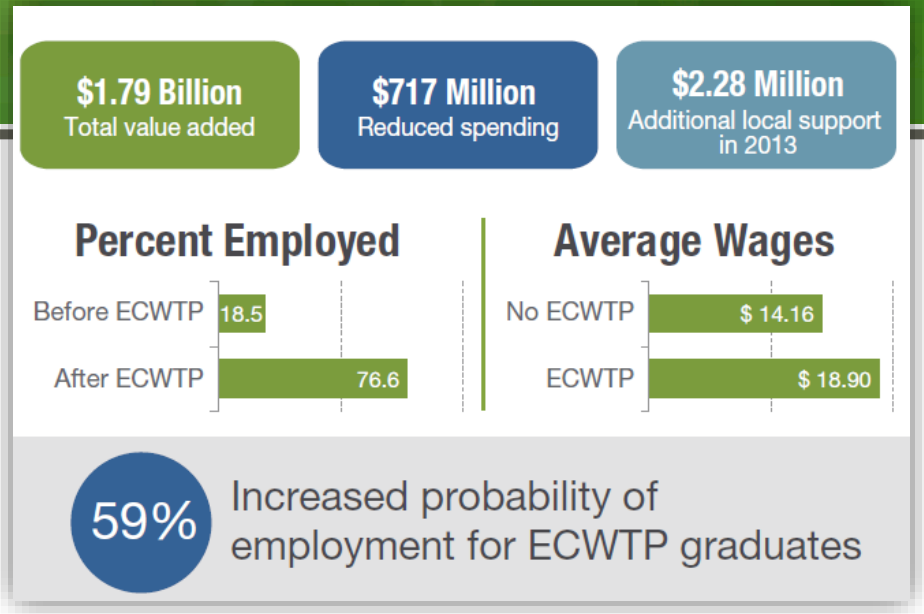


Major Findings

Economic Impact: $100 million return on $3.5 million investment

- Increased probability of employment by 59%
- $1.6M in higher earnings for graduates
  (from increased likelihood of employment, more hours worked, and higher wages)
- $1.79 billion (total value added)
- $717 million reduction in government expenditures

Economic impact report: https://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/wtp_ecwtp_report_508.pdf



The analysis/report was completed by NIEHS WTP, the National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training, and economists Robert Baumann and Bryan Engelhardt from College of Holy Cross

A **2019 financial survey of graduates** conducted by the **NJ/NY Hazardous Materials Training Center**, showed:

$14,500

Average income for applicants who were working

50% unemployed

25% receiving SNAP, TANF, UI

13% living in public housing

5% living in shelter/ transitional housing

Pre-program

5 Years Later

$96,800

Average base pay for those working 5 years after program

77% earn over $50,000

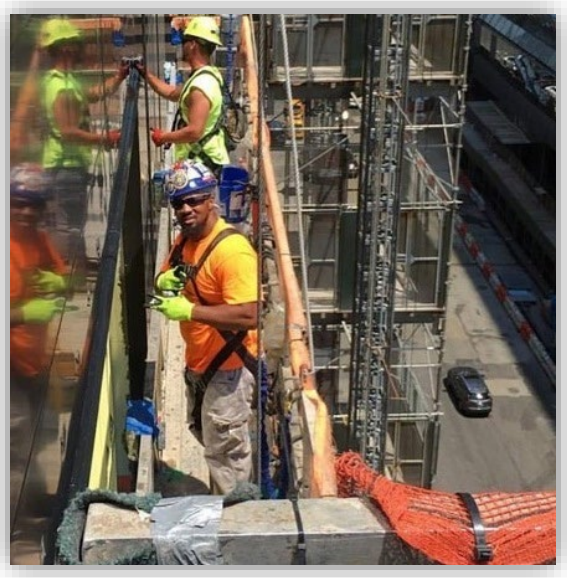
24% earn over $100,000

30% own homes

30% are debt free

Major Findings

Program leaves a life-changing impact on people from various cultures and backgrounds. Trainee stories are the best metric of success.



Before enrollment, A. Coleman was earning minimum wage and had unstable housing. He completed BuildingWorks in 2014 and graduated the apprenticeship in 2018. He is now a journeyman making over $100,000.

Coleman stated that he is very confident about his financial future and said he has investments in addition to retirement savings.

E. Watson joined Constructing Hope in 2017. At the time, she was struggling to find life direction and dealing with addiction. She later obtained an apprenticeship with the Carpenter's Institute earning $18.46 per hour.

"The most important thing was the relationships I formed with the staff and the amount of support they gave me. They would do anything within their power to help me succeed."

Major Findings

Program leaves a life-changing impact on people from various cultures and backgrounds. Trainee stories are the best metric of success.

T. Sturdivant was unemployed with no vocational experience. He entered an apprenticeship program and later became journeyman. Today, he is a business agent for the Operative Plasterers and Cement Masons International Assoc. Local Union 633.

Sturdivant said he does not know where he would be right now if not for the ECWTP. "I'm grateful for the career this program gave me, but the safety training is what keeps you in the career."

J. Alvarado was previously incarcerated, earning less than $11,000 a year, receiving SNAP benefits and living in public housing. He graduated BuildingWorks and finished his apprenticeship in 2019.
He is currently a journeyman carpenter.

Alvarado credits the program for preparing him for union life. He has worked on many sites throughout New York City and regularly visits BuildingWorks classes to speak with students about his experiences.

More trainee spotlights here: https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2599 and
August 2020 NIEHS E-Factor at https://factor.niehs.nih.gov/2020/8/feature/3-feature-worker-training/index.htm

Sustainable jobs: Climate change, green jobs and more….

JobTrain participants in East Palo Alto posed with Beard, far right; WTP Director Joseph "Chip" Hughes, second row, middle; and WTP Public Health Educator Demia Wright, second row, far left. (Photo courtesy of Sharon Beard)

- CPWR works with JobTrain to deliver construction training for individuals in East Palo Alto, California. This partnership led to an agreement with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission that ensures graduates are a first source for hires by the commission.
- OAI, Inc., in Chicago, uses funding from the Illinois Future Energy Jobs Act to teach solar panel installation.
- Individuals who received hazardous materials instruction from the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Consortium served on the front lines of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- Community health workers trained by the Steelworkers Charitable and Educational Organization are helping local populations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grantees & Capacity Building for Communities

Building capacity in many underserved communities and target areas across the U.S. through education, training, and worker empowerment

Grantee	Target Areas/ Locations
New Jersey/New York Hazardous Materials Training Center	Metro areas surrounding NYC, NY and Newark, NJ
Western Region Universities Consortium	Metro areas of Los Angeles, CA ▪ Tribal Communities in Alaska ▪ Portland, OR
CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training	East Palo Alto, CA ▪ Flint, MI ▪ New Orleans, LA ▪ Roxbury, MA
OAI - Opportunity, Advancement, & Innovation in Workforce Development	Chicago, IL ▪ Dallas, TX ▪ Kansas City, MO and KS ▪ Indianapolis, IA
Historically Black Colleges and Universities Consortium (Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Inc.)	New Orleans, LA ▪ Houston, TX ▪ Pensacola, FL ▪ Detroit, MI
Sustainable Workplace Alliance	Orlando FL▪ Brevard County, FL ▪ San Juan, PR

ECWTP 25th Anniversary Webpage: tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2596

Grantee spotlights available here: https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2598

WTP: Future Directions

- **COVID-19 Response:** Training delivery and responsiveness to COVID-19 Executive Orders
- **Environmental justice and climate change:** Community partnerships for climate change response, environmental hazard awareness, and job readiness
- **Job creation and employment for workers:** Continued support of Environmental Career Worker Training Program, potentially under Justice40
- **Hazardous material and emergency response training for Native Americans:** Increasing skills and capacity within tribes

Environmental Justice: Fence Line Community and Tribal Training under the NIEHS/Department of Energy (DOE) Nuclear Worker Training Program

- Training extended to communities and tribal groups around DOE sites
  - Provides certifications and skills to increase employment eligibility at DOE site
  - Helps keep people safe in their current jobs
  - Builds tribal capacity to respond to incidents or emergencies on or near their lands (e.g., train derailment, radiological event, underground pipe leak)
  - Addresses environmental justice efforts around legacy contamination in water and soil

Fence Line and Tribal Training Examples under the NIEHS/DOE Program

Piketon, Ohio and the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PGDP) Site

- A Radiological Control Technician (RCT) course offered by United Steelworkers (USW) Local 1-689 in Piketon, Ohio helped fill a shortage of RCTs to do cleanup work at PGDP

Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation (CTUIR) (Washington and Oregon)

- USW Tony Mazzocchi Center trained tribal members to become OSHA trainers, now affiliated with the Washington State OSHA training institute. Both tribes are requesting more health and safety training

Rail workers living on Native American reservations near Albuquerque, New Mexico

- International Brotherhood of Teamsters delivered training to workers who support the transportation of radiological materials to and from Los Alamos National Laboratory as well as other DOE facilities.

Additional Resources

- ECWTP 25th Anniversary Page - https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2596
- NIEHS E-Factor Article on 25th Anniversary of ECWTP - https://factor.niehs.nih.gov/2020/8/feature/3-feature-worker-training/index.htm
- 2021 ECWTP Fact Sheet - https://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/assets/docs/ecwtp_factsheet_2021.pdf
- Economic Impact Report - http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/wtp_ecwtp_report_508.pdf
- ECWTP Podcasts - https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2600
- Best Practices Report - http://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/public/hasl_get_blob.cfm?ID=10040
- NIEHS Worker Training Program - http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/index.cfm
- NIEHS/DOE Nuclear Worker Training Program - https://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/training_program_areas/doe/index.cfm
- NIEHS National Clearinghouse - http://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/

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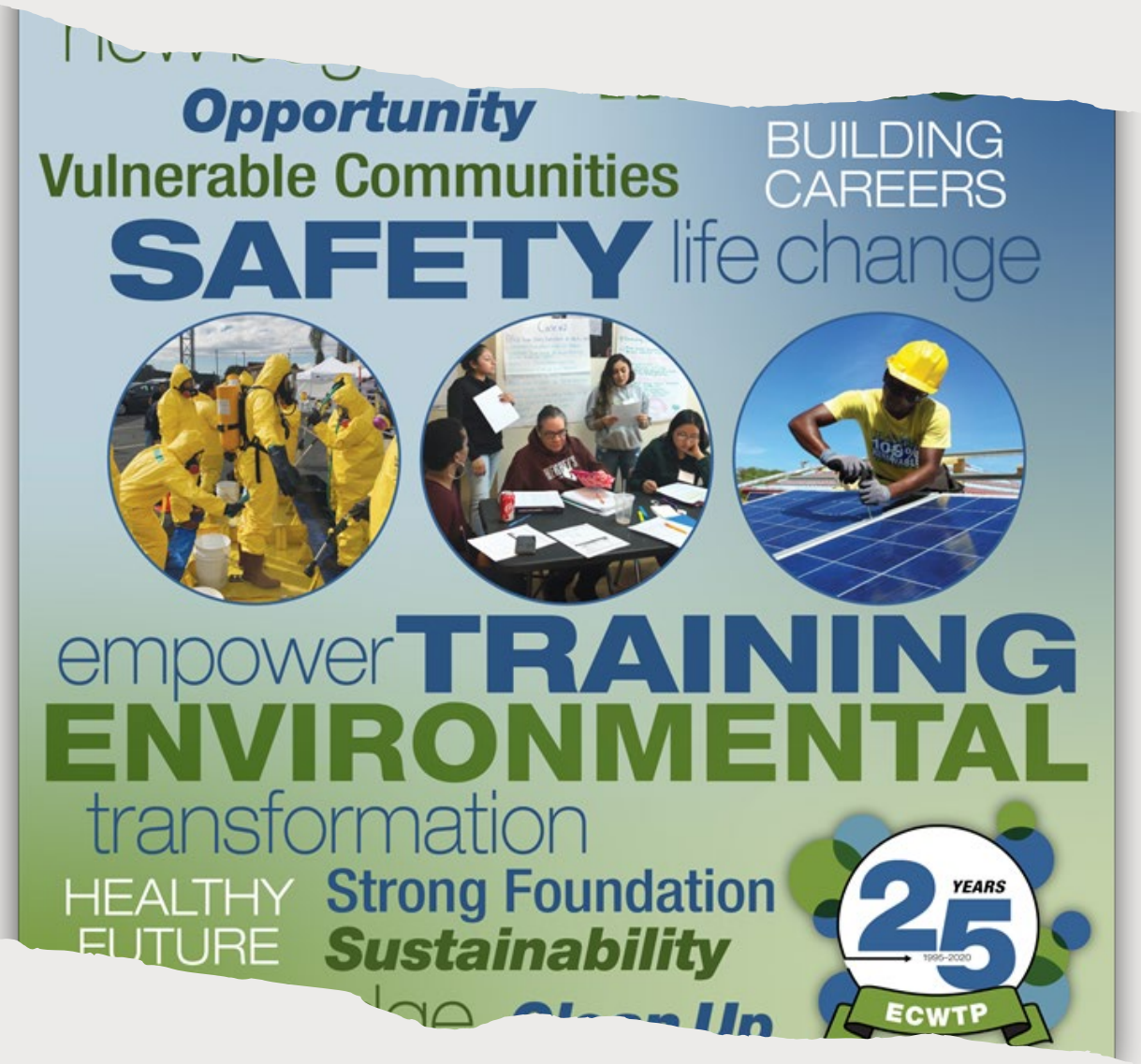

Questions?