COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund



WCTF FY 25 ANNUAL REPORT

MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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MassHire Berkshire



INTRODUCTION

ANNUAL ADDRESS

The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) was established by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2006 to invest in demand-driven, sector-based workforce training partnerships that prepare unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers for high-demand careers across the Commonwealth. For nearly two decades, WCTF has supported programs that strengthen collaboration among employers, education and training providers, and the public workforce system by enhancing the skills, earnings, and advancement opportunities of Massachusetts residents while improving the competitiveness of the state's businesses and industries. In 2018, the Legislature renamed WCTF grant awards in honor of the late Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly, a steadfast champion of equitable access to workforce opportunities. In that spirit, the Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grants continue to foster partnerships powered by local expertise and rooted in inclusion by connecting untapped talent to family-sustaining careers while helping employers cultivate diverse, skilled workforces across Massachusetts.

WCTF grants expand training capacity and talent pipelines in key sectors including Healthcare, Early Education and Care, Information Technology, Life Sciences, Construction, Transportation, and Hospitality. Over time, these investments have enabled regional and statewide partnerships to adapt to evolving labor market conditions, respond to immediate hiring needs, and drive long-term workforce innovation. In 2025, amid continued economic shifts, technological transformation, and new state and federal initiatives, WCTF programs recalibrated to align with emerging industries, strengthen job quality, and expand equitable access to training. Grantees have also deepened employer engagement, strengthened data use for continuous improvement, and embraced best practices such as trauma informed program design, wraparound supports, and competency-based training to accelerate career mobility.

Guided by its statutory mission, WCTF ensures that all Massachusetts residents can participate in and benefit from the Commonwealth's economic growth. The 2025 report highlights grantee outcomes, including the number of education and service providers funded; participants trained, employed, and retained; post-placement wages and benefits; and cost-per-participant analysis.

WCTF is administered by Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), and in collaboration with the Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC). This partnership represents a cross-secretariat partnership aligning workforce, education, and economic development efforts to close persistent skills gaps statewide. In accordance with Section 2WWW of Chapter 29 of the Massachusetts General Laws, this report is submitted annually to the Secretary of Administration and Finance; the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means; and the Joint Committees on Community Development and Small Business, Education, Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, Labor and Workforce Development, and Public Health.

COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

2025 HIGHLIGHTS:

EXPANDING IMPACT THROUGH WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIP



Grantees gather for a Community of Practice

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) programs are key in unlocking greater labor force participation and building a skilled workforce by connecting unemployed and underemployed individuals to skills training for in-demand occupations needed by employers and industry. By expanding access to workforce opportunities for underemployed and unemployed individuals across Massachusetts, WCTF particularly attracts individuals those whose life experiences and circumstances create barriers to employment without targeted support. Participants include individuals seeking to improve their wages to a level sufficient to raise a family, workers re-entering the labor force after extended absences, individuals without formal credentials or completed education pathways, including multilingual jobseekers whose first language is not English. Other participants may face barriers related to past involvement with the criminal justice system, health conditions or disabilities, or recovery from substance use challenges. Through targeted workforce investments, WCTF programs aim to expand equitable access to career pathways while strengthening employer talent pipelines and supporting regional economic growth.

In 2025, WCTF advanced its commitment to expanding impact through workforce innovation and partnership by supporting programs across all regions of Massachusetts and a diverse range of industry sectors. Funded initiatives were led by community colleges, community-based organizations, MassHire Regional workforce development boards, MassHire career centers, and training providers, all working in close partnership with employers to design and implement demand-driven workforce solutions aligned with regional labor market needs.

All WCTF funded programs implement training strategies that integrate workforce innovation with strong employer engagement, including:

- Providing training and placement services to unemployed or underemployed individuals seeking entry into new industries, supporting participants in securing full time, unsubsidized employment upon program completion.
- Supporting incumbent workers through targeted training opportunities that enable career advancement, wage progression, and movement into higher level roles within their organizations.
- Through these collaborative partnerships and industry-informed training models, WCTF continues to strengthen workforce pathways that support both worker mobility and employer competitiveness across the Commonwealth.

WCTF UMBRELLA OF GRANTS

PROGRAMS OVERVIEW



Grant announcement at STCC

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND PROGRAMS

The sections below include an overview of each program funded by the WCTF followed by a breakdown by industry/sector and region.


Greater Lawrence Technical School

DONNELLY WORKFORCE SUCCESS GRANTS

The Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grants ("Donnelly") represent the cornerstone investment of the WCTF, supporting demand driven workforce programs developed through industry sector partnerships across the Commonwealth. These grants fund training, placement, and advancement initiatives designed to connect unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers with high-demand career pathways while addressing the evolving talent needs of Massachusetts employers.

Through the Donnelly Workforce Success Grants, WCTF advances its core mission of creating workforce solutions that are responsive to both employer demand and worker opportunity. Programs emphasize industry-informed training models, strong employer engagement, and regional collaboration among workforce boards, education providers, community-based organizations, and industry partners. The initiative supports skill development, wage progression, career advancement, and improved worker retention, contributing to stronger workforce pipelines and enhancing the competitiveness of Massachusetts businesses.

Donnelly programs prioritize individuals across the Commonwealth who face barriers to employment or advancement without targeted supports. This includes individuals who are underemployed, workers re-entering the labor force after extended absences, multilingual jobseekers, and individuals without formal educational credentials seeking pathways into family-sustaining careers. Programs integrate training with wraparound supports, career navigation, and employer aligned pathways to ensure participants can successfully transition into and advance within in-demand occupations.

In 2025, WCTF awarded $17 million through 32 Donnelly Workforce Success Grants, projecting to train approximately 2,460 individuals for employment opportunities across priority sectors. These investments reflect a broader strategic approach that includes regional initiatives such as Healthcare Workforce Hubs, contextualized ESOL workforce programs, and sustainability-focused partnerships that encourage employer co-investment and long-term workforce system alignment. By combining targeted funding with technical assistance, peer learning, and regional collaboration, the Donnelly program continues to strengthen the statewide workforce ecosystem and expand access to equitable economic mobility.

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND PROGRAMS CONTINUED


Notre Dame Education Center

HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE HUB INITIATIVE

The Healthcare Workforce Hub Initiative, initially funded in 2024 through federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) resources appropriated by the Massachusetts Legislature to the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF), continues to advance a statewide strategy to strengthen healthcare and behavioral health workforce pipelines. The initiative was designed to support unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers in accessing training, career advancement, and employment pathways aligned with critical workforce shortages across the Commonwealth.

In 2024, WCTF awarded over $16 million to nine regional Healthcare Workforce Hub partnerships, each led by a MassHire workforce board. These awards followed a structured six-month planning process that prioritized employer engagement, regional collaboration, and data-informed workforce strategies, transitioning into implementation grants supporting training, placement, and career advancement programs. The Healthcare Workforce Hubs engage more than 75 partners that include healthcare employers, community-based organizations, colleges, training providers, and workforce system stakeholders and align with over 20 healthcare training programs statewide.

Throughout 2025, the initiative has expanded beyond initial implementation to focus on long-term sustainability and systems integration. WCTF supported regional partners in developing sustainability strategies that include employer co-investment, alignment with state workforce and health policy priorities, and strengthened collaboration with industry associations, educational institutions, and public sector partners. These efforts aim to ensure that successful training models and workforce pipelines continue beyond ARPA funding, positioning the Healthcare Workforce Hubs as durable regional infrastructure for addressing ongoing workforce needs.

The Healthcare Workforce Hub Initiative demonstrates the value of coordinated regional partnerships in building scalable workforce solutions. By integrating training, career navigation, and employer engagement within a collaborative framework, the Hubs have strengthened workforce system alignment and created pathways for individuals to enter and advance within high demand healthcare and behavioral health careers while supporting employers facing critical staffing shortages.

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND PROGRAMS CONTINUED



WCTF PROGRAM DESIGN GRANTS

The WCTF Program Design Grant was originally created as a redesigned evolution of the SCALE grant, incorporating feedback from grantees, workforce partners, and industry stakeholders to strengthen the development of high-quality workforce training initiatives. The funding for the grants was derived from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). While ARPA funding was beneficial, it was also temporary; as a result, with decreased ARPA funding available in 2025, the Program Design Grant initiative concluded.

The Program Design Grant supported planning, partnership development, and program design activities that prepared organizations to submit competitive implementation proposals to the WCTF-Donnelly Success Grant. Through structured cohort-based learning and targeted technical assistance from Commonwealth Corporation staff, grantees were supported in developing employer-informed training models aligned with regional workforce needs and industry demand.

Program Design Grants provided awards of up to $50,000 to support organizations in developing training and placement strategies for unemployed and underemployed individuals, as well as advancement pathways for incumbent workers. The redesigned model introduced a higher funding cap, an extended grant cycle, and more intensive technical assistance supports, enabling grantees to move beyond early-stage concept development toward implementation-ready program models. By engaging participants in six-month cohort experiences, the program fostered peer learning, strengthened cross-sector collaboration, and reinforced employer engagement as a core component of effective workforce program design.

With this effort closed, the initiative leaves a lasting legacy through stronger regional partnerships, enhanced program design capacity within the field, and a more prepared portfolio of workforce initiatives positioned for implementation through WCTF funding opportunities. Lessons learned through the Program Design model continue to inform WCTF strategy, reinforcing the importance of early-stage design support in advancing innovative, industry-aligned workforce solutions.

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND PROGRAMS CONTINUED

Program Design Grants Concluded in 2025		
Grantee Name	Award Amount	Projected Training Area
African Bridge Network	$49,968	Healthcare
Brookline Center for Community Mental Health	$49,976	Healthcare & Education
Greater Lawrence Community Action Council	$32,604	Healthcare
Health & Home Care Training of New England	$48,970	Healthcare
International Institute of New England	$50,000	Information Technology
Jewish Vocational Service	$50,000	Healthcare (Phlebotomist)
MV Center for Education and Training	$49,305	Manufacturing
Next Leadership Development	$50,000	Healthcare (Certified Nursing Assistant & Licensed Practical Nurse)
North Shore Community Action Program	$23,385	Climate & Disaster Resilience Planning
Open Sky Services	$17,787	Healthcare
Operation ABLE	$29,978	Healthcare (Home Health Aide & Personal Care Assistant)
Polus Center for Social & Economic Development	$50,000	Education

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND PROGRAMS CONTINUED



Grantees gather for a Community of Practice

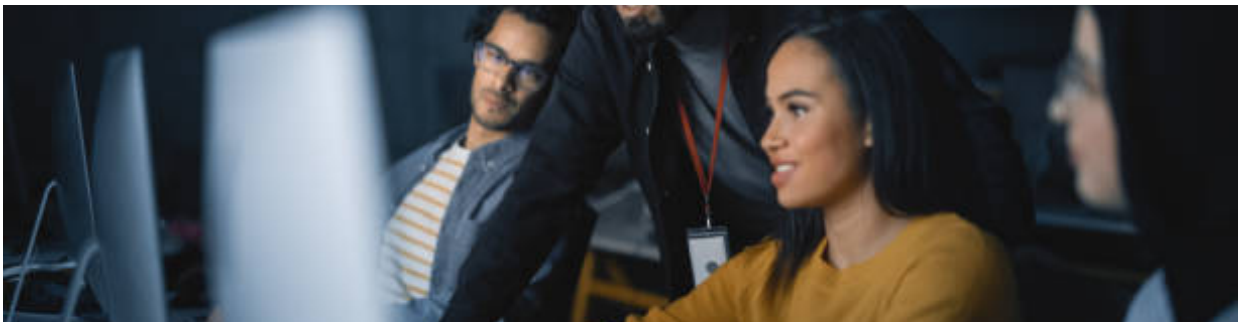
ESOL CONTINUATION GRANTS

The WCTF continued to support the implementation of sector-based training and placement programs integrating contextualized English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services to better serve individuals with limited English proficiency. These programs were designed to reduce language barriers while building occupational skills aligned with regional industry demand, supporting equitable access to workforce opportunities and career advancement.

Following an initial planning phase and early implementation investments, three grantees continue this work through extended implementation funding: Catholic Charitable Bureau of the Archdiocese of Boston, Inc. – El Centro del Cardenal; Merrimack Valley Workforce Board – City of Lawrence; and UMass Amherst. These programs reflect sustained collaboration between workforce boards, community-based organizations, education providers, and employers to develop training models that integrate language acquisition with industry-specific skills.

Continuation funding has allowed grantees to deepen employer partnerships, refine training models based on participant outcomes, and expand access to career pathways for multilingual workers. The integration of contextualized ESOL into sector-based training has strengthened participant engagement, improved retention, and supported advancement into in-demand occupations. As these initiatives move toward completion, they demonstrate the long-term impact of combining workforce training with language access strategies to support inclusive economic mobility and meet employer workforce needs.

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND PROGRAMS CONTINUED



WCTF ESOL - EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The WCTF ESOL Emergency Assistance initiative was established through a Supplemental Budget passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in spring 2024 to provide targeted workforce development resources supporting residents of the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter system. This initiative was a cross-secretariat strategy to expand access to employment pathways for work-authorized individuals experiencing housing instability and to address employer workforce needs across Massachusetts.

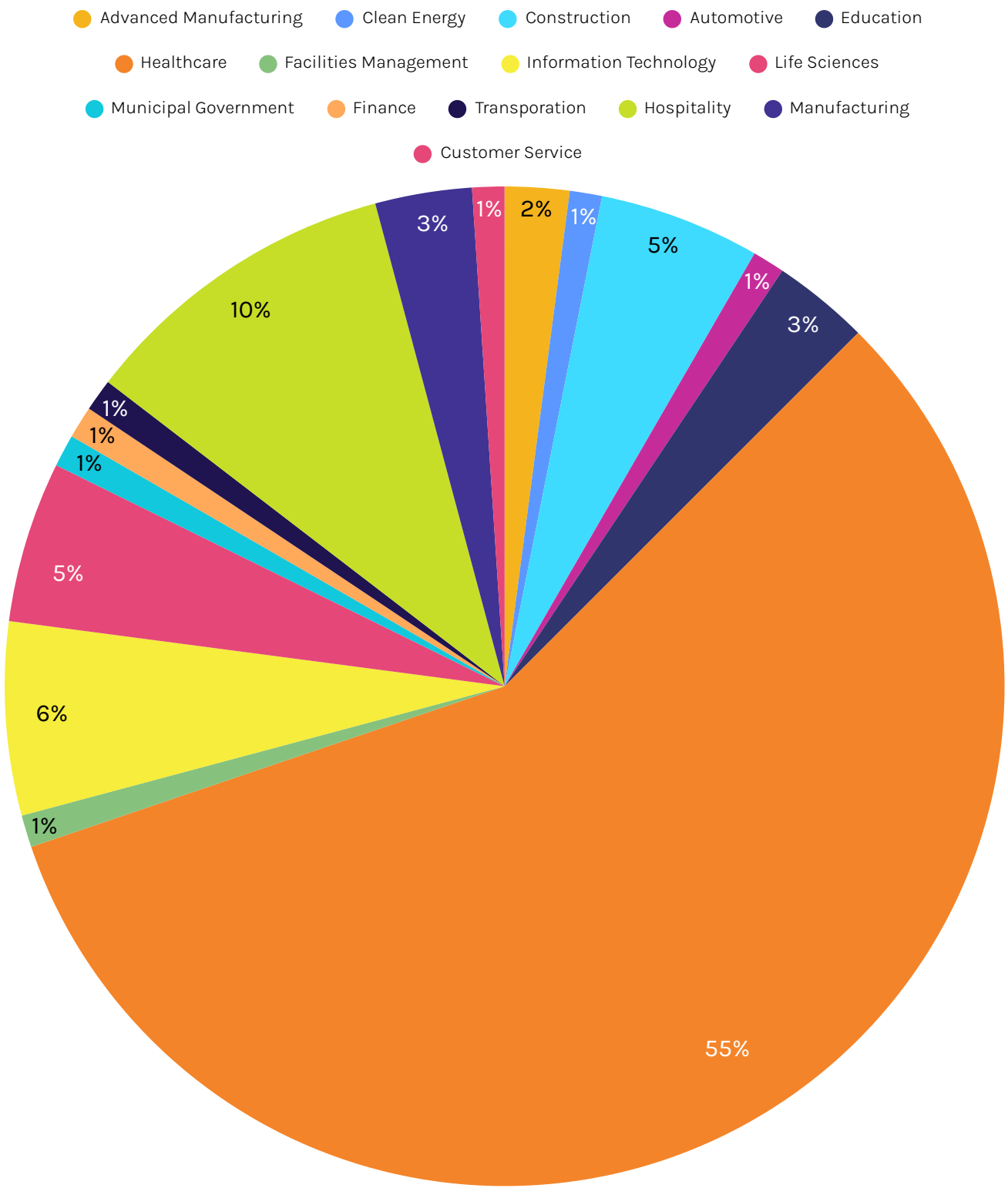
Through supplemental funding provided by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), Commonwealth Corporation developed two complementary funding opportunities designed to accelerate employment-focused English language training and career readiness supports: (1) the WCTF Enhancements Request for Proposals (RFP) and (2) the ESOL for Employment RFP. Eligible applicants included community-based organizations, workforce boards, training providers, employers, community colleges, and industry associations.

The WCTF Enhancements RFP supported existing WCTF Donnelly Success Grant and ESOL grantees in expanding training capacity through additional cohorts and participant slots specifically serving individuals residing in or transitioning from emergency shelter systems. The ESOL for Employment RFP focused on new program development including RISE , supporting innovative training models that integrate contextualized ESOL instruction with job placement services and career wraparound supports. Programs emphasized rapid connection to unsubsidized employment across a range of industries, aligning participant skills development with employer demand.

Throughout 2025, this initiative strengthened workforce system alignment by connecting language acquisition, workforce training, and employment services to broader housing stabilization goals. By prioritizing employment as a pathway toward economic stability, WCTF-funded programs helped reduce barriers faced by multilingual jobseekers, expanded employer access to talent pipelines, and advanced the Commonwealth's strategy to support individuals and families transitioning out of shelter into sustainable employment and long-term economic mobility.

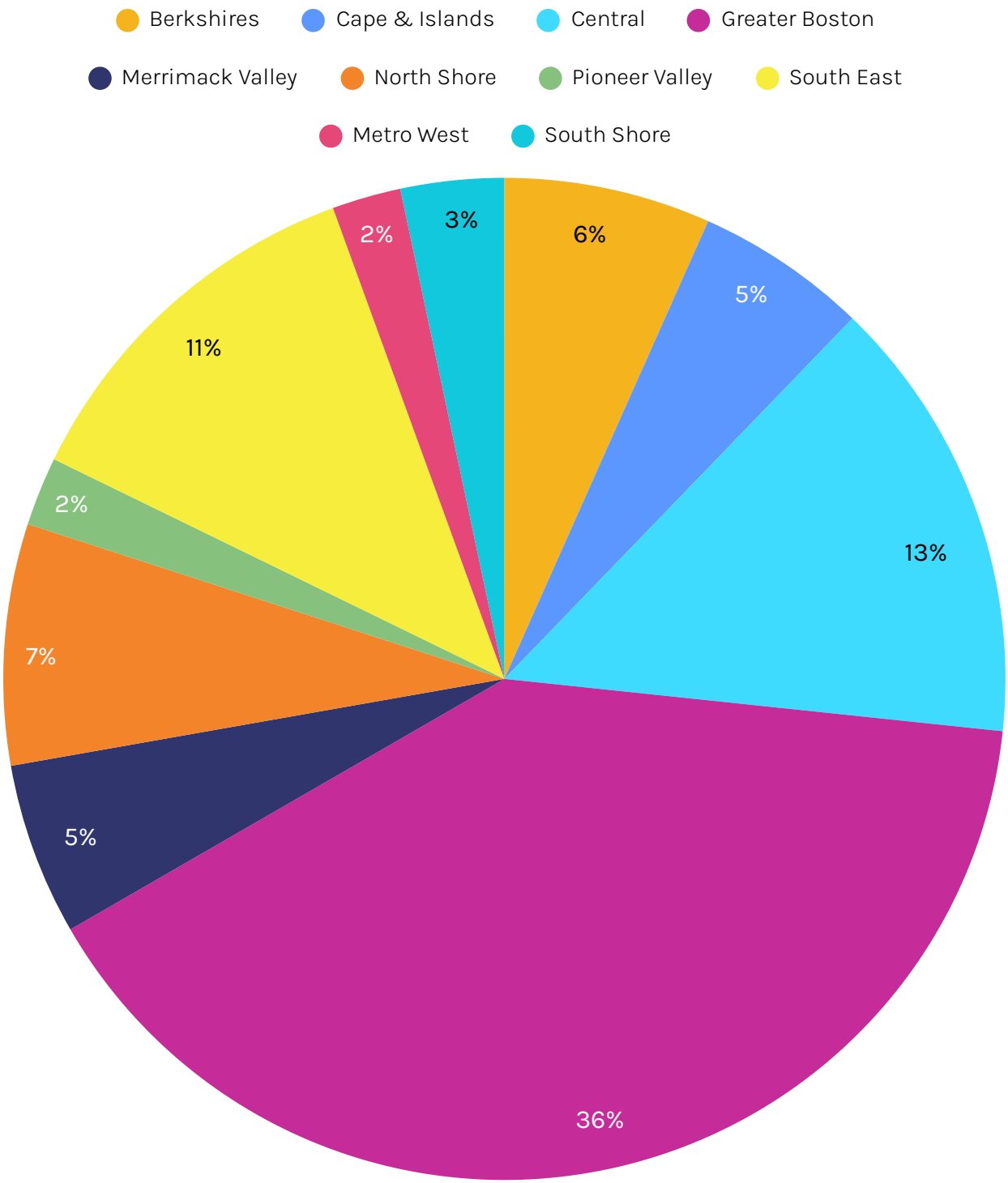
WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST BY INDUSTRY/SECTOR

The following charts show how WCTF grants operating in 2025 reached a variety of industries and geographic regions. Healthcare represents the largest share of funded training, reflecting persistent workforce demand, followed by construction, information technology, hospitality, education, and other in-demand sectors.



WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST GRANTEES BY REGION

Regionally, WCTF funding reached every part of the Commonwealth in 2025, with strong representation in Greater Boston, the Pioneer Valley, Central Massachusetts, and the North Shore. This illustrates WCTF's statewide footprint and balanced approach to meeting regional workforce needs.



BY THE NUMBERS: **DONNELLY GRANTS THAT CLOSED IN 2025**



Emerge Career

DONNELLY GRANTS CLOSED IN 2025

The nature of WCTF grantmaking means that each year, some grants will conclude while others will continue and conclude in an upcoming year. During 2025, a total of 22 Donnelly grants concluded. These grants included over $12.4 million in funding to serve participants. Grantees surpassed initial projections and served over 1,613 participants, with 1,362 completing training and 1,123 going on to obtain employment. Participants were trained in a variety of areas, including multiple healthcare training programs (CNA, HHA, PCA, CHW, and PCT certifications) as well as education, information technology, hospitality, manufacturing, and more.

# of Donnelly Grants Closed	# of Participants Enrolled	# of Participants that Completed Training	% of Completers that Obtained Employment
22	1,613	1,362	82%

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Enrollments	Training Industry
1199SEIU Training and Upgrading Fund	$500,000	100	Healthcare (Certified Nursing Assistant)
Action for Boston Community Development	$500,000	108	Education
Asian American Civic Center	$319,185	40	Banking
Asian Women for Health Inc.	$401,854	51	Healthcare (Community Health Worker)
Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology	$500,000	57	HVAC
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center	$500,000	72	Healthcare
Building Pathways	$500,000	100	Construction
Cape Cod Regional Technical High School	$276,474	51	Construction

DONNELLY GRANTS
CLOSED IN 2025

Grantee Name	Award	Enrollm	Training Industry
Catholic Charities of Boston	$1,000,000	164	Healthcare (Certified Nursing Assistant & Home Health Aide)
Community Servings	$600,000	52	Hospitality
Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute	$500,000	82	Life Science (Lab Technicians)
Holyoke Community College	$1,000,000	122	Healthcare (Certified Nursing Assistant & Patient Care Technician)
Jewish Vocational Service	$630,469	82	Healthcare (Pharmacy Technician)
Massachusetts Restaurant Association	$100,013	24	Hospitality
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Foundation	$115,906	13	Healthcare (Radiologic Technologist)
Massachusetts Biotechnology Council (MassBio)	$1,000,000	114	Construction
MassHire Greater Brockton Workforce Board	$486,072	25	CDL
MassHire North Shore Workforce Board	$319,880	42	Healthcare (Mental Health Specialist)
Metro North Regional Employment Board	$500,000	49	Construction
Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment	$342,179	34	Education
Mount Wachusett Community College	$285,909	31	Manufacturing
Per Scholas	$1,000,000	200	Information Technology

DONNELLY GRANTS CLOSED IN 2025

The WCTF has continued to drive economic innovation and talent development across a wide range of industries and regions throughout the Commonwealth over the past decade. Through sustained investment in demand-driven workforce partnerships, WCTF-funded programs have supported thousands of individuals in accessing family-sustaining wages and advancing their careers.

Strong interest from workforce partners, employers, and regional stakeholders reflects the ongoing demand for WCTF programs and the continued relevance of its model. A robust pipeline of high-quality proposals underscores the field's commitment to innovative workforce solutions and signals continued investment in programs that will support businesses and create expanded career opportunities for thousands more individuals across Massachusetts in the years ahead.



Grant announcement at STCC

BY THE NUMBERS: **OPEN GRANTS OPERATING IN 2025**



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WCTF GRANTS OPEN IN 2025

There were 95 grants that continued to operate in 2025, including 74 Donnelly grants, 10 RISE grants, 9 Healthcare / Behavioral Health Hub grants, and 2 ESOL Continuation grants. Some grantees have multiple grants that were awarded in different years but run concurrently due to the multi-year cycle of WCTF grants. These grants serve every region of the Commonwealth and are training in industries including healthcare, hospitality, human services, life sciences, manufacturing, and more.

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Grant Type	Training Industry	Region
Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Grants (74)				
1199SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund	$717,220	Donnelly	Healthcare	Statewide
Action Ambulance	$1,298,547	Donnelly	Healthcare	Statewide
Action for Boston Community Development	$400,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
African Bridge Network	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Asian American Civic Association	$500,000	Donnelly	Hospitality	Greater Boston
Asian American Civic Association	$500,000	Donnelly	Finance	Greater Boston
Aspire	$500,000	Donnelly	Culinary	Berkshires
Bay Path University & Cambridge College	$436,062	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Bay Path University	$1,768,036	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Benjamin Franklin Cummings Inst. of Technology	$333,663	Donnelly	Healthcare	South East
Bioversity	$500,000	Donnelly	Life Sciences	Greater Boston

WCTF GRANTS OPEN IN 2025

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Grant Type	Training Industry	Region
Boston Children's Hospital	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Boston Children's Hospital	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Building Pathways Boston	$500,000	Donnelly	Construction	Greater Boston
Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce	$500,000	Donnelly	Transportation	Cape & Islands
Cape Cod Regional Tech High School	$225,425	Donnelly	Construction	Cape & Islands
Catholic Charities	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Catholic Charities	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Center for Community Health Education Research and Services	$469,330	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
City of Salem	$500,000	Donnelly	Manufacturing	Greater Boston
Community Action, Inc.	$254,015	Donnelly	Information Technology	Central
Community Servings Inc.	$500,000	Donnelly	Hospitality	Greater Boston
Emerge Career	$1,350,000	Donnelly	Transportation	Statewide
English for New Bostonians	$400,000	Donnelly	Hospitality	Boston
Entrepreneurial & Business Collaborative	$621,758	Donnelly	Hospitality	Pioneer Valley
Forge Team	$384,250	Donnelly	Trades	Greater Boston
Franklin Hampshire Employment and Training Consortium	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Friends of Hernandez	$292,838	Donnelly	Education	Greater Boston
Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute	$500,000	Donnelly	Life Sciences	North Shore

WCTF GRANTS OPEN IN 2025

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Grant Type	Training Industry	Region
Greater Lawrence Technical School	$456,135	Donnelly	Healthcare	Merrimack Valley
Greenfield Community College	$417,997	Donnelly	Education	Pioneer Valley
Health & Home Care Training of New England	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Hebrew Senior Life	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Holyoke Community College	$1,504,050	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Holyoke Community College	$1,014,468	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Holyoke Community College	$442,674	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Holyoke Community College	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
Holyoke Health Center	$540,795	Donnelly	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
International Institute of New England	$512,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Merrimack Valley
Jewish Vocational Service	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Jewish Vocational Services	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Lawrence Community Works	$500,000	Donnelly	Construction	North Shore
Mass General Brigham	$511,500.00	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Massachusetts Restaurant Association Education Foundation	$351,702	Donnelly	Hospitality	Statewide
MassBioEd Foundation	$500,000	Donnelly	Life Sciences	Greater Boston
MassHire Central Region Workforce Board	$870,592	Donnelly	Transportation	Central
MassHire Central Regional Workforce Board	$423,185	Donnelly	Wastewater Treatment	Central

WCTF GRANTS OPEN IN 2025

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Grant Type	Training Industry	Region
MassHire Greater Brockton Workforce Board	$239,984	Donnelly	Transportation	South Shore
MassHire Metro North Regional Employment Board	$500,000	Donnelly	Manufacturing	North Shore
MassHire North Central Workforce Board	$247,818	Donnelly	Sterile Processing	Central
Middlesex Community College	$498,160	Donnelly	Healthcare	South Shore
Montachusett Regional Voc Tech	$351,888	Donnelly	Automotive	Central
Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries	$326,715	Donnelly	Human Services	Greater Boston
Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries	$471,592	Donnelly	Human Services	Greater Boston
National Grid	$1,794,131	Donnelly	Trades	Statewide
North Shore Community Action Programs	$452,812	Donnelly	Healthcare	North Shore
Notre Dame Education Center Lawrence	$482,430	Donnelly	Healthcare	Merrimack Valley
Open Sky Community Services, Inc.	$3,506,900	Donnelly	Healthcare	Central
Operation ABLE	$286,080	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Per Scholas	$500,000	Donnelly	Information Technology	Greater Boston
Polus Center for Social & Economic Development, Inc.	$500,000	Donnelly	Human Services	Central
Quincy College	$500,000	Donnelly	Culinary	Greater Boston
Quinsigamond Community College	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Central
Quinsigamond Community College	$500,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Central
Regis College	$260,150	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston

WCTF GRANTS OPEN IN 2025

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Grant Type	Training Industry	Region
Seacoast Rehabilitation and Nursing Center	$235,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	North Shore
Snapchef	$500,000	Donnelly	Culinary	Statewide
Springfield Technical Community College	$500,000	Donnelly	Information Technology	Pioneer Valley
Springside Skilled Nursing Home and Rehabilitation	$234,500	Donnelly	Healthcare	Berkshires
Stack Education Partners	$450,000	Donnelly	Healthcare	Greater Boston
STEMatch	$1,245,291	Donnelly	Information Technology	North Shore
Tech Foundry Inc	$500,000	Donnelly	Information Technology	Pioneer Valley
RISE Grants (10)				
1199SEIU Training & Upgrading Fund	$3,000,000	RISE	Healthcare	Statewide
Asian American Civic Association	$306,000.00	RISE	Hospitality	Greater Boston
Catholic Charities	$300,000.00	RISE	Healthcare	Greater Boston
Center for Community Health Education Research and Services	$299,988	RISE	Healthcare	Greater Boston
City of Worcester Executive Office of Economic	$300,000	RISE	Healthcare	Central
Greater Lawrence Community Action Council	$400,000	RISE	Construction	North Shore
Greenfield Community College	$195,098	RISE	Health Care	Pioneer Valley
Holyoke Community College	$300,000	RISE	Healthcare, Hospitality	Pioneer Valley
La Colaborativa	$400,000	RISE	Hospitality, Manufacturing	Boston
MassHire Greater Lowell Workforce Board	$323,619	RISE	Healthcare, Manufacturing	North Shore

WCTF GRANTS OPEN IN 2025

Grantee Name	Award Amount	Grant Type	Training Industry	Region
Healthcare & Behavioral Health Workforce Hubs Grants (9)				
Berkshire County Workforce Investment Board	$2,227,173	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	Berkshires
Boston Private Industry Council	$972,674	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	Greater Boston
MassHire Cape and Islands Workforce Board	$1,921,784	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	Cape
MassHire Central Region Workforce Board	$1,110,478	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	Central
MassHire Greater Lowell Workforce Board	$2,251,556	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	North Shore
MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board	$2,660,220	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	South East
MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board	$1,271,343	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	Pioneer Valley
MassHire North Shore Workforce Board	$2,413,206	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	North Shore
MassHire South West Workforce Board	$1,459,243	HC/BH HUB	Healthcare	South Shore
ESOL Continuation Grants (2)				
Catholic Charities: El Centro del Cardenal	$799,855	ESOL Continuation	Information Technology	Greater Boston
MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board	$849,587	ESOL Continuation	Manufacturing	Merrimack Valley

DATA IN ACTION
HEALTHCARE/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HUBS GRANTS



GRANTS CLOSED IN 2025

The WCTF-funded Healthcare/Behavioral Health Hub grants reflect nine regional partnerships that include approximately 75 healthcare employers across the state representing acute care, long-term care, community-based care, home care, pharmacies, and emergency services.

REGIONAL PARTNER	TOTAL INVESTMENT
MassHire Berkshire	$2,227,173
MassHire Boston (Boston Private Industry Council)	$972,674
MassHire Cape and Islands Workforce Board	$1,921,784
MassHire Central Region Workforce Board	$1,110,478
MassHire Greater Lowell Workforce Board	$2,251,556
MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board	$2,660,220
MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Inc.	$1,271,343
MassHire North Shore Workforce Board	$2,413,206
MassHire Metro Southwest	$1,459,243

Since the inception of the HC/BH Hubs grants, a total of 1,274 participants have enrolled and received training services. Of these participants, so far, 827 have completed their training, of which 74% have obtained employment. The average wage for job placements is $20.58 per hour.

# OF ACTIVE GRANTS	# OF PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED	# OF PARTICIPANTS THAT COMPLETED TRAINING	% OF COMPLETERS THAT OBTAINED EMPLOYMENT
9	1,274	827	74%

Grantee applicants to the WCTF and Healthcare/Behavioral Health Hubs training programs proposed training in the following healthcare professions:

Acute Care Nurse Assistant	Home Health Aide (HHA)
Cardiovascular Technologist & Technician	Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor
Certified Addiction Recovery Coach	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
Certified Nurse Assistant Preceptor	Medical Assistant
Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA)	Mental Health Peer Support Specialist
Clinical Medical Administrative Assistant	Pharmacy Technician
Clinical Research Coordinator	Phlebotomist
Community Health Worker (CHW)	Registered Behavioral Technician
Customer Service Roles in Healthcare	Radiologic Technician
Direct Service Associate	Research Administrator
Healthcare Program Coordinator	Surgical Technician

PARTICIPANT **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**



Partners gather for a Community of Practice

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

WHO DOES WCTF SERVE?

Between FY2022-2025, nearly 6,000 participants enrolled in WCTF grantee programming. Across these programs, the average wage for job placements reached $21.76, with an overall job placement rate of 78.8% among program completers.

The majority of participants are working-age adults between the ages of 25-44, with an average age of 33 years old. Participants are predominantly underemployed or underemployed at the time of their enrollment, although a small number of incumbent individuals have received training as well.

Many participants face compounding challenges: nearly three-quarters are low-income and nearly half of participants have a high school diploma (or equivalent) or less. Programs prioritize outreach and recruitment strategies designed to engage individuals facing barriers to employment, and participant demographics—including income levels, educational attainment, and other key indicators—demonstrate the program's commitment to expanding equitable access to career pathways and economic mobility across Massachusetts.

The following table represents demographics for participants enrolled in all Donnelly, Replenishing Employer Investment in Education & Workforce Training (RENEW) Demonstration Grant, ESOL, and Healthcare / Behavioral Health Hub grants between July 1st, 2021, and June 30th, 2025.

Total Participants: 5,999

Age

Age 16-24 Years Old	28%
Age 25-34 Years Old	32%
Age 35-44 Years Old	23%
Age 45-54 Years Old	11%
Age 55+ Years Old	6%
Average Age	**33**
Median Age	**31**

Gender

Female	64%
Male	34%
Non-Binary/Other	1%
Undisclosed/Missing	1%

Highest Education Level

Less Than High School	5%
HS Diploma/HiSET/GED	43%
Some Postsecondary/College	26%
Associate Degree	6%
Bachelor Degree or Higher	19%

Other Characteristics

Persons with Disabilities	6%
Veterans	2%
Low Income **	74%

Employment Status at Enrollment

Incumbent	4%
Under-employed	48%
Unemployed	47%

** The numbers are derived from the consolidation of data pertaining to race and ethnicity.*
*** Low Income: Participant is considered low-income if their annual family income is below 200% of the poverty income level for the size of family and/or is receiving public assistance such as TAFDC, SNAP, EAEDC, SSI.*

GRANTEE AND PARTICIPANT **SUCCESS STORIES**





STRENGTHENING THE HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE THROUGH EDUCATION

Since 2004, WCTF funding to BEST Hospitality Training has helped hotel workers build careers that transform lives and communities. Within the nonprofit, there are two main tracks: Education programs for Union Workers and Job Seeker Programs. The organization offers free education to union hotel workers through its partnership with union UNITE HERE Local 26 and provides pre-apprenticeship and placement programs for job seekers, which have been funded by the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF).

CommCorp spoke with Apprenticeship Director Lori Sylvia and Director of Contracts & Grants Hillary Nguyen about how WCTF funding has strengthened their programs. “We became the first registered pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program in the country for hotel housekeeping in 2017, certified by the MA Department of Labor Division of Apprentice Standards.” Lori says, “We’re proud that these are life-changing jobs – union roles that start around $30-31 an hour, with strong benefits and job stability.”

Director of Contracts & Grants, Hillary Nguyen, explained that multi-year grants like WCTF make a lasting difference. “Our job seeker programs are entirely dependent on public and private grants. I had worked with Commonwealth Corporation before and always found them easy to communicate with and transparent about requirements. We loved that it’s a three-year grant- it lets us set clear goals and track progress across multiple cohorts.”

With the support of the WCTF grant, BEST Hospitality training has experienced an expansion of their hospitality and housekeeping pre-apprenticeship program. Hillary shares, “Before the grant, we had smaller classes and limited capacity. This funding allowed us to open more seats and expand our cohorts. So fa, we’ve achieved: 92% enrollment goal (46 individuals), 100% completion goal (45 participants), 95% placement goal (38 individuals employed), and Average placement wage is $29.03/hour. These are people we couldn’t have served without this grant.”

Raphael Narcisse, a graduate of the hospitality training program, shared his experience: “I participated in the Hospitality Training Program, with a focus on housekeeping operations. The program provided hands-on experience and professional development in areas such as guest service, attention to detail, teamwork, and maintaining high standards of cleanliness.”

He also shared how it impacted his career growth: “The program had a very positive impact on my career growth. It helped me strengthen my communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills while building my confidence in a professional setting. I also gained valuable industry knowledge, connections, and practical experience that have helped me advance in my career and perform more effectively in my current role.”

Access to funding and resources through WCTF has also supported BEST Hospitality Training through important partnerships. One of those is with Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), which provides case management and supportive services for students facing barriers such as food insecurity, housing instability, or transportation costs. The grant also funds a partnership with Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), providing students with case management and wraparound support to address barriers that can derail their education. Through the program, participants can receive up to $1,200 in assistance for needs such as transportation, work supplies, or childcare, while ABCD navigators connect them with resources like SNAP, fuel assistance, and childcare vouchers. "Our partnership with ABCD has been the biggest innovation," says Hillary. "After the pandemic, many students faced new challenges—from transportation and childcare to food insecurity. This grant allowed us to build a support system that connects them with resources they may never have accessed otherwise."

Lori added, “Funding allows us to run these programs consistently, which keeps partnerships strong. They rely on us when they have job openings. Many hotels – like the Omni Seaport - host our trainings in their own hotel rooms, where students are taught by professional housekeepers. That kind of hands-on learning is invaluable.”

According to BEST Hospitality Training, the WCTF grant has strengthened its programs, expanded student support systems, and reinforced partnerships across the hospitality sector. The organization notes that this funding has also encouraged new investments in future workforce development efforts. Hillary shared, “We’re already looking for renewal or expansion opportunities. We hope future WCTF funding can support both the housekeeping and culinary programs, offering more choice for participants to pursue either union housekeeping or culinary jobs. We’re continuing new program cycles in January 2026, expecting to serve even more people across both training tracks.”





CAREGIVERS AND CULTURAL NAVIGATORS: EXPANDING ACCESS TO HOME HEALTH CAREERS

Building a stronger health care system requires expanding access to personalized care and creating pathways to careers in health care for underrepresented groups. By investing in training programs for health care workers who face higher barriers to employment, we can develop a pipeline of workers who meet employer demand for jobs and deliver care to their communities that is informed by lived experience and cultural knowledge. In turn, businesses grow, and individuals find economic stability and opportunity.

Improving the health and wellbeing of all Boston residents, especially those disproportionately affected by systemic inequities, is the work of the Center for Community Health Education Research and Service (CCHERS). CCHERS conducts community-led research, advocates for underserved populations, and leads structural change within the health care system to ensure Massachusetts residents can thrive – not just survive.

One way CCHERS is strengthening the health care system is by equipping under- or underemployed residents of Boston with the "skills and certifications to thrive in direct care and home health jobs," says Karena Longo, Program Manager at CCHERS. The HEART program – Healthcare Employment Access Recruitment and Training – prepares workers, especially women of color and those who live in public housing, to advance in the health care field. HEART delivers a foundational curriculum on direct care and provides hands-on skill-building opportunities to practice supporting patients' daily self-care activities. Program graduates receive the Home Health Aide certification and certifications in mental health and memory care to "increase employability and salary potential," shares Longo.

"Many HEART participants experienced difficulties securing employment prior to the program due to communication barriers," says Longo. "In a health care setting, communicating with clients and coworkers is crucial for responding appropriately to patient needs." CCHERS received numerous applicants to the HEART program from individuals who had limited English proficiency and immigrants receiving Emergency Assistance who needed to secure employment. CCHERS recognized the need to integrate English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training into the HEART program to help more people access Home Health jobs.

As a result, CCHERS applied for and received a RISE grant under the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. RISE grants are designed to support ESOL services and career readiness for individuals currently or previously living in Emergency Assistance Shelters in Massachusetts. RISE is focused on practical English proficiency to improve workplace communication and cultural understanding.

With support from RISE, CCHERS developed a version of the HEART program with eight weeks of ESOL training in addition to the regular curriculum. ESOL topics include conducting small talk with patients, discussing symptoms, and preparing for job interviews. Participants are assessed at the beginning and end of the program using the BEST Plus 2.0 standardized test, developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics, to evaluate progress in English comprehension and communication skills.

The first round of HEART ESOL graduates earned industry-recognized Home Health Aide certification and showed significant improvement in English proficiency, according to Longo. Many participants started with limited conversational ability and understanding of workplace terminology and now have the confidence to communicate, ask questions, interview for jobs, and write in English. Most advanced multiple Student Performance Levels (SPLs), such as one participant who started at SPL 4, or low intermediate proficiency, and advanced to SPL 7, or advanced proficiency, significantly increasing her communication skills and independence.

To support the job search process and plan for the future, the HEART program provides trauma-informed job readiness – including resume-building, mock interviews, and job search strategy – and the “You Matter” training from Mothers for Justice and Equality. This training helps participants set personal and professional goals and develop strategies to achieve them. CCHERS also has strong employer partnerships that match program participants with job opportunities before they are officially accepted into the program and help them “align training to employer expectations and industry standards,” shared Longo.

Developing English language skills, earning in-demand certifications, and gaining connections to sustainable employment are crucial to these participants' economic stability and mobility. Additionally, these participants represent populations who are often underrepresented and underserved by our health care system. As they move into the Home Health workforce, they can provide better care for their communities.

“Boston is very diverse, racially, linguistically, and culturally. Having a diverse pool of health care providers - especially in home care - strengthens trust, communication, and cultural competence. Diversity directly improves health care and addresses social determinants of health,” shares Jessica Espiritusanto, Senior Program Manager for CCHERS. “Navigating the health care system can be very intimidating. Home Health Aides serve as cultural navigators and advocates, giving underrepresented individuals a voice.”



COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

We thank you for your continued support.



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