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#### INTRODUCTION

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Career Technical Initiative (CTI) is a strategic response of the Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) to address the ongoing need for skilled workers in the manufacturing, construction, and trades sectors. Administered by Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) on behalf of the WSC, CTI focuses on expanding the training capacity of high schools that have designated Chapter 74 vocational programs. These vocational-technical schools utilize their facilities and equipment to offer training in high-demand career pathways through evening and weekend shifts, serving unemployed and underemployed Massachusetts residents. CTI fosters collaboration between Chapter 74 schools, MassHire Career Centers, and Market Makers at the regional Workforce Boards. Through this collaboration, these stakeholders engage employers, align training programs with local workforce requirements, recruit participants in need of relevant skills, and facilitate their job placement upon graduation.

CTI launched in Fiscal Year (FY) 21 with 10 participating schools, expanded to 12 schools in FY22, grew further to 27 schools in FY23, and increased its reach to 29 schools in FY24, serving over 1,900 participants across 20 career pathway programs statewide. CTI is funded through appropriations in the FY21, FY22, FY23, and FY24 State Budgets and funds appropriated through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds of 2021. To date, \$80.1 million has been appropriated to fund CTI, with a total of \$30.6 million awarded so far through eight funding rounds. This represents a 77% increase in funds awarded compared to the previous year. Additional funds will be awarded in FY 24 through requests for proposals.



### A SIGNATURE INITIATIVE OF THE WORKFORCE SKILLS CABINET

In January of 2020, the Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) launched the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) as a strategic response to the persistent demand for skilled labor within the construction, trades, and manufacturing sectors across the Commonwealth. CTI leverages the existing vocational training infrastructure within the state's Chapter 74 high schools. By expanding access to high-quality career technical education to Massachusetts residents, CTI establishes a robust workforce pipeline, aligning with the specific hiring needs of employers.

Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) administers CTI, providing funding and technical assistance to designated Chapter 74 vocational programs to build and scale up their capacity to deliver training programs targeted at adults. CTI programs are designed in an "after dark" format, deliberately scheduled outside of regular school hours, thereby optimizing the use of vocational-technical facilities. This approach results in the transformation of vocational high schools throughout the Commonwealth into "Career Technical Institutes" that operate three shifts a day, thus significantly expanding accessibility to hands-on education and training. The CTI model also provides integrated credentialing, comprehensive wraparound support, as well as placement services for participants.

The population that CTI serves comprises Massachusetts residents who are currently unemployed or underemployed. These individuals need additional skills to meet employers' hiring requirements and find meaningful employment. For those who have faced a disconnect from the workforce and require assistance in re-establishing connections to viable job opportunities, CTI provides work readiness training and placement support.

The state budget line item for CTI (7002-1091) calls for a report to be filed with the joint committee on labor and workforce development and the house and senate committees on ways and means that shall include, but not be limited to, the:

- i) "a list of vocational-technical schools that are operating career technical institutes;
- ii) the amount of funding each vocational-technical school will receive under this item;
- iii) the number of students served by career technical institutes, including technical institutes established in chapter 74 of the General Laws and the number of adult learners participating in industry-recognized credentialing pathways at each vocational-technical school, delineated by training program; and
- iv) the employment outcomes of the graduates of the training programs."

This report provides an overview of the performance of programs funded in CTI Rounds one through four. This report does not include performance data on Rounds five through eight as those training programs are still either in progress or will launch between January 2024 and August 2025, consistent with their workplan.

# CREATING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH



### BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

The strategic allocation of state and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds has facilitated the creation of new positions within the MassHire system, including regional MassHire Upskilling Navigators and Market Makers. CTI schools form collaborative partnerships with Market Makers and Upskilling Navigators to identify labor market needs within each workforce region, actively involve employers, recruit and screen participants, and assist graduates getting hired into jobs related to their field of training.

#### **UPSKILLING NAVIGATORS**

Upskilling Navigators are positioned at MassHire Career Centers throughout the Commonwealth, with the objective of streamlining the processes related to marketing, recruitment, screening, and enrollment in state-funded training and employment initiatives, including CTI. Leveraging their expertise on skill development training and available job vacancies within their specific regions, Upskilling Navigators also provide case management services and work readiness training to CTI students, assisting them securing employment after graduation.

#### MARKET MAKERS

The WSC has designated seven regional workforce skills planning areas, and within these regions, Market Makers have been introduced as new roles within the lead MassHire Workforce Board. Market Makers assume key roles in actively engaging with employers, facilitating connections between employers and training providers, identifying grant funding opportunities, assisting employers in the hiring process, and building pipelines of skilled workers. Market Makers play a pivotal role in assisting CTI-funded schools in understanding the specific business requirements within their respective regions by providing input on occupations that are currently in high demand. Furthermore, Market Makers build stronger connections among businesses, community-based organizations, regional state partners, and the WSC and its representatives.

#### **EMPLOYERS**

Employers are crucial to the design of CTI, as they provide insights into the economic outlook for their businesses and help Market Makers understand their specific workforce needs. Employers partner with CTI schools to shape curriculum design and share first-hand information on industry trends. Drawing on their expertise and professional networks, employers also support marketing efforts of CTI programs and provide a pool of instructors as needed. In addition, employers offer internship opportunities to CTI students and hire them upon graduation.

#### CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES &

### **GRANT AWARDS**



### CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND GRANT AWARDS

CTI launched in 2020 with 10 participating schools funded through the FY21 state budget appropriation. In December 2021, the WSC allocated an additional \$25 million from ARPA CSFRF funding appropriated by the state legislature to expand the number of participating CTI schools and the available career pathways. Subsequently, the number of CTI-funded schools increased to 12 schools in FY22, to 27 schools in FY 23, and to 29 schools in FY 24. Out of the combined allocation of \$80.1 million from state and ARPA funds, a total of \$30.6 million has been awarded across eight funding rounds, with additional funds earmarked for distribution in FY24 through requests for proposals.

#### CTI FY21-FY24 FUNDING

The table below provides a breakdown of the total funding awarded to each Chapter 74 school for planning, start-up/implementation, and other related expenses as part of their CTI programming from its inception in January 2020 through October 2023.\*

GRANTEE NAME	PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION/ START UP	TOTAL FUNDING
Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District	Х	х	\$1,956,594.00
Blue Hills Regional Technical School		х	\$544,000.00
Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School		x	\$66,318.00
Cape Cod Regional Technical High School		х	\$104,578.15
City of Westfield/Westfield Public Schools	x		\$3,559.50
Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School		х	\$3,807,000.00
Franklin County Technical School	x	x	\$1,810,000.00
Greater Fall River Vocational School District (Diman)		х	\$320,220.00
Greater Lawrence Technical School		x	\$3,013,000.00
Greater Lowell Technical High School		х	\$788,000.00
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School	x	x	\$370,000.00
Keefe Regional Vocational Technical School District		х	\$520,000.00

<sup>\*</sup>CommCorp and the WSC continue to engage schools throughout FY24, and the exact amount ultimately received by schools is subject to performance metrics and use of funds throughout planning, start-up and implementation phases.

## CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND GRANT AWARDS CONTINUED

GRANTEE NAME	PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION/ START UP	TOTAL FUNDING
Lynn Vocational Tech High School		X	\$199,760.00
Madison Park Technical Vocational High School		х	\$1,628,000.00
Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District		x	\$2,520,890.00
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School		X	\$1,707,669.54
Nashoba Valley Technical High School		x	\$1,701,000.00
Old Colony RVTHS		×	\$599,813.20
Pathfinder Regional VTHSD		x	\$280,000.00
Salem Public Schools		×	\$327,948.00
Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School		x	\$399,992.50
Southeastern Regional School District		×	\$768,685.98
Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational School District		x	\$471,702.00
South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School	x	x	\$2,849,986.00
Taunton High School		x	\$215,237.00
Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District		×	\$579,742.00
Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School	x	x	\$848,800.32
Weymouth Public Schools		x	\$183,347.00
Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School		x	\$1,772,000.00
Worcester Public Schools	x	x	\$241,787.66
TOTAL			\$30,599,630.85

### **ENROLLMENT**

# GROWTH



#### **ENROLLMENT GROWTH**

Between funding Rounds one and two, CTI served 244 adult learners in manufacturing and construction/trades pathways. In rounds three and four, enrollment grew notably by 37.7% to 336 students. The ongoing Rounds five, six, seven and eight have seen further impressive growth, with 1,368 students enrolled, representing a substantial 307% increase.

To date, total enrollment across all funding rounds stands at 1,948 students, incorporating the data from all funding rounds thus far.

GRANTEE NAME	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (ROUNDS 1-8)
Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District	81
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School	36
Blue Hills Technical School	37
Cape Cod Regional Tech High School	13
Greater Fall River Vocational School District (Diman)	7
Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School	259
Franklin County Technical School	61
Greater Lawrence Technical School	246
Greater Lowell Technical High School	81
Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School	41
Madison Park Vocational Technical High School	143
Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District	96
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School	155

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For this report, we are reporting on data collected through May 2023. Data are subject to change, and there are ongoing adjustments as grants progress.

# ENROLLMENT GROWTH CONTINUED

GRANTEE NAME	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (ROUNDS 1-8)
Nashoba Valley Technical High School	141
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School	29
Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School	22
Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School	18
South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School	138
Southeastern Technical Institute	94
Taunton High School	6
Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District	28
Upper Cape Cod Technical School	56
Weymouth High School CTI	12
Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District	120
Worcester Public Schools Night Life CE	28
Grand Total	1,948

\*

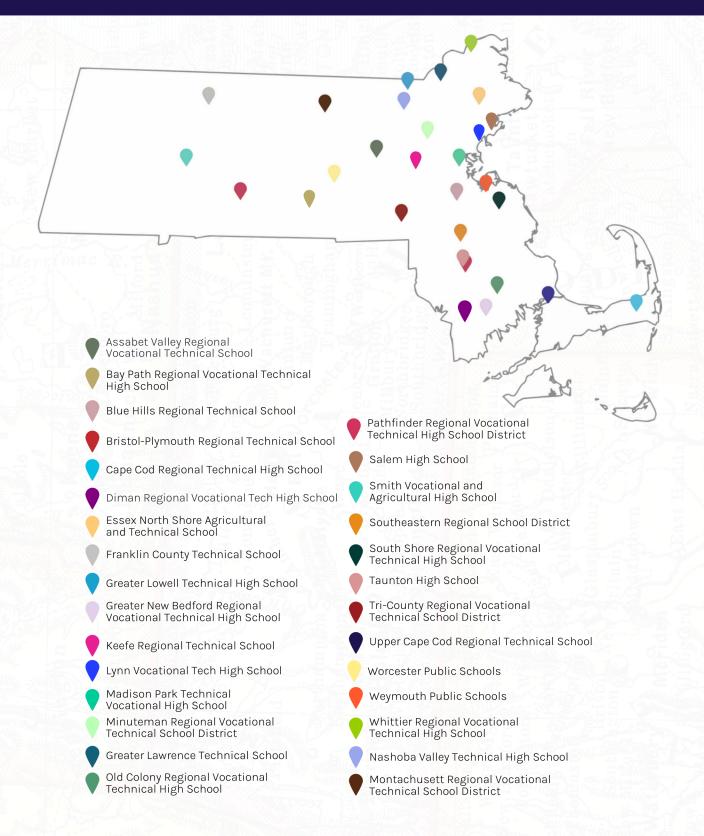
### ENROLLMENT GROWTH CONTINUED

The following table offers an enrollment summary per training pathway spanning Rounds one to eight. Welding is the most popular pathway by far with a total of 430 enrollments across all rounds, followed by Automotive Technology (237) and Plumbing (221), while HVAC and Carpentry each attracted 216 participants. These five pathways make up 68% (1,320) of the total CTI enrollment. This demonstrates a significant level of interest in hands-on technical training in industries with strong demand across the Commonwealth.

Although certain pathways show relatively lower enrollment figures, they provide opportunities for students interested in specialized areas. One example is the Robotics pathway which is offered for the first time through Minuteman Institute of Technology in Round 8. This showcases the extensive reach of CTI, offering educational and training opportunities to a considerable number of individuals seeking skill development across all 20 WSC-approved pathways.

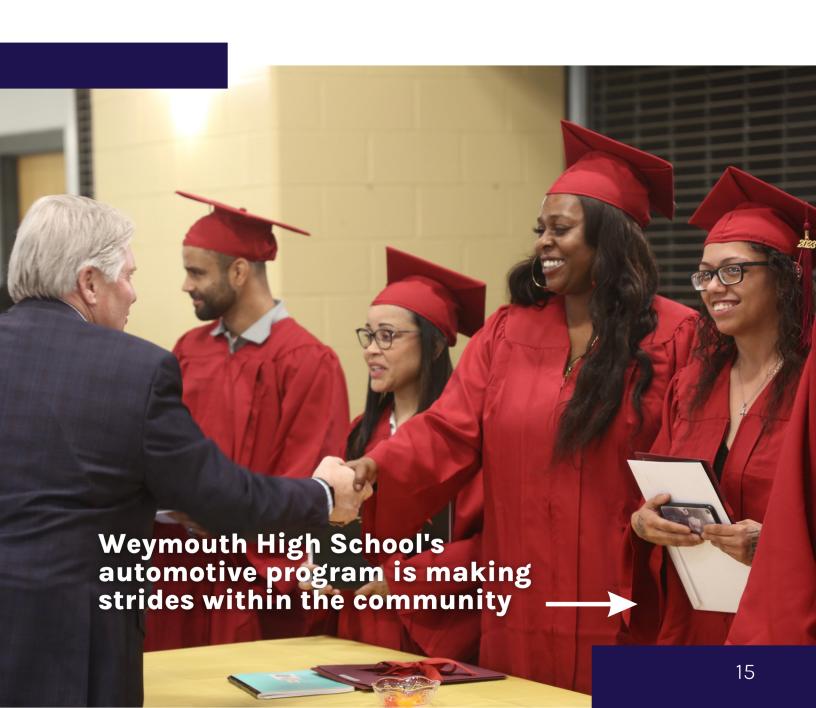
TRAINING PATHWAY	TOTAL ENROLLMENT (ROUNDS 1-8)
Advanced Manufacturing	96
Auto Body/Collision Repair	49
Automotive Technology	237
Biotechnology Lab Tech	16
Carpentry	216
Construction Labor	19
Culinary Arts	156
Diesel Technician	8
Electrical	175
Electrical Systems Tech	16
Electronics Tech/Robotics	28
Groundskeeping & Equipment	23
HVAC	216
Machine Technology	19
Marine Trades Tech	13
Plumbing	221
Property Maintenance	10
Welding/Metal Fabrication	430
Grand Total	1,948

#### CTI SCHOOLS FUNDED TO DATE



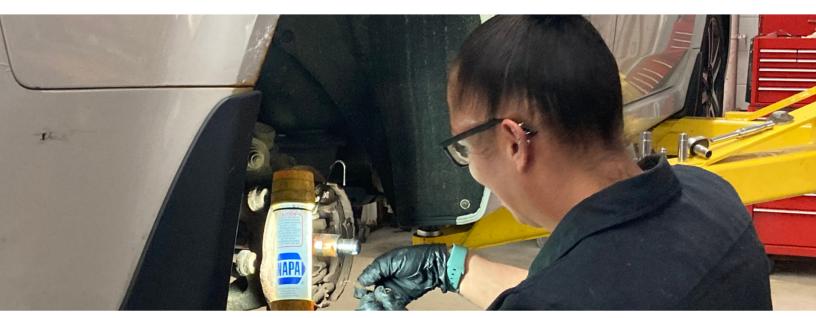
#### INSPIRING NARRATIVES OF

### ACHIEVEMENT



#### The New Motive: Automotive

Breaking barriers and inspiring future generations are just some ways Weymouth High School's Automotive program is helping the community.



According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, nationally, about 67,700 openings for automotive service technicians and mechanics are projected each year, on average, from 2022 to 2032. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

Data demonstrates how male-dominant the automotive industry is, with over 926,000 automotive service technicians and mechanics currently employed in the United States represented only 2.9% by women. Yet, these numbers did not stop Jasmine Oviawe, a Quincy resident and program participant in Weymouth High School's Automotive Program. Jasmine saw this program as an opportunity to obtain a career.

Jasmine's experience was supported by a \$175,470 CTI grant awarded to Weymouth High School to deliver training in Automotive Technology for adults. Managed by Tiffany Henry-Brown at the high school, this grant and program support unlocked an opportunity for Jasmine to find a fulfilling career as an automotive technician.

"This was our first year ever doing it, and our goal was to have a course that trained students to perform a variety of automotive services from fuel systems, brakes, vehicle maintenance, tire service, and any mechanical skill that is entry-level based that will help them go out and receive an entry-level job," says Tiffany, program manager at Weymouth High School's CTI Program. "We saw there was a need, particularly within the South Shore, and when you drive around here, you see sign after sign of these automotive places saying that they need help, so why not train people to help," Tiffany passionately shares.

The need to train more technicians continues to rise. According to TechForce Foundation, the national demand for technicians nearly doubled from 136,503 in 2020 to 258,000 in 2021; by 2025, the demand for new automotive, diesel, and collision technicians is expected to rise to 797,530.

Through participation in the CTI program this past spring, Tiffany and her team worked in close collaboration with MassHire to enroll a diverse group of twelve low-income or unemployed adults aged 24-62 years old. As part of the program, students received certifications in Ford Electude, ALI Lifting it Right, Hot Works, and S/P2, which included Valvoline oil changing filters certification.

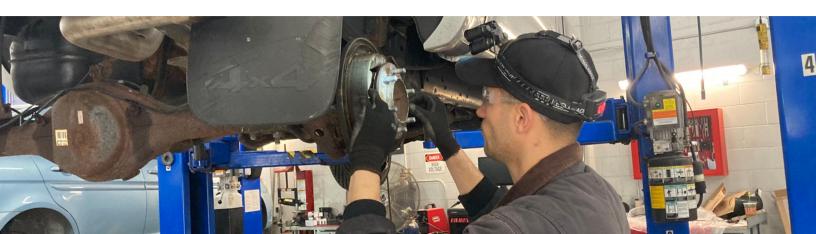
Weymouth High School partnered with local employers, including Quirk Ford, Sullivan Tire branches in Braintree and Weymouth, A1 Automotive, Mass Tire, JT Auto Inc., and Unlimited Auto Service Inc. From Tiffany's experience, all employers needed more workers. Weymouth High School was also able to partner with MassHire, including MassHire Quincy Career Center and MassHire South Shore Workforce Board, for additional resources for the students.

Jasmine shared that she grew up with a hardworking family who she saw would frequently bond over automotive experiences. "Prior to joining the program, I was working in corporate America as a loan processor for 15 years, and I just wasn't feeling fulfilled," shares Jasmine.

As a mother, Jasmine feels that she is becoming an exceptional role model by proving to her daughter and other women that she belongs in this field. Given the low number of women in this industry, Jasmine hopes to inspire other women to take up space in industries that are typically male-dominated. "I like to be the anomaly; I like to inspire others to do something that people tell them they can't do or that people don't really see and then just like standing there and being there and sticking with it," she said. Another inspiration was rooted with her daughter as Jasmine says, "what kept me motivated was also my daughter. Now that she is also exposed to (the automotive industry) and knows about it and how I went through the program, she can see that that's an avenue she can go down."

According to Jasmine, her favorite experience from the program was working on circuit boards and creating radios. Reflecting on this experience, Jasmine shared, "We were learning electricity and working on circuit boards and were creating radios and soldiering wires. It was cool that one table was making the transponder for the radio and the other was making the receiver, and we got music and tried to talk to each other and even made a fan go, and I had never seen anything like that."

Overall, Weymouth's program was highly successful with all students excelling with a grade of 90 or above on certifications. Weymouth High School's Automotive Technology program has changed the lives of many, including Jasmine.



### OUTCOMES &

# IMPACT



#### OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Program progress and success are assessed through four performance metrics: enrollment, credential attainment, program completion, and employment/retention. Job placement and retention rates for program completers are evaluated three months after the close-out of each grant. This allows grantees to gather information on the employment status of participants after program completion, perform data reconciliation, including reconciling documentation requirements, meet the 30-day retention benchmarks, and conduct participant-level follow-up activities.

As of December 2023, Rounds one, two, three, and four have been closed and completed. Rounds five through eight are ongoing, and CommCorp will provide placement outcomes for these rounds in future reports as data becomes available.

During Rounds one through four, CTI provided funding to 11 Chapter 74 schools across the Commonwealth. Out of 580 participants, 88% successfully completed the program and earned one or more credentials. Typically, participants obtained safety credentials (e.g., OSHA 10/30, Hot Work Safety, or S/P2 Safety and Pollution Prevention) in combination with technical credentials, such as AWS 1G for welding, EPA608 for HVAC, or ASE Certification for automotive technicians. Combining high-quality training with earning industry-recognized credentials positions graduates well when seeking employment in high-demand occupations.

The implementation of CTI programming commenced during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, with Round one starting in January 2021. Round two was awarded and launched during the peak of the pandemic, with completion dates extended until June 2022. Considering this timing, the first two rounds faced the challenge of facilitating job placements for graduates during a period marked by widespread business closures, layoffs, furloughs, and other significant disruptions in the job market caused by the pandemic. To assist with job placement in the face of these difficult circumstances, CTI graduates were provided with comprehensive support through the MassHire system. Despite these challenges, the employment rate for the 510 graduates from Rounds one through four stands at 86%.<sup>2</sup>

Out of the graduates hired following completion of training in Rounds one through four, 35% reported a salary range between \$20-25 per hour, and 12% reported earning \$25 per hour or more. From an employer's perspective, CTI grantees have formed partnerships with 375 employers in rounds one through four who have hired individuals from this skilled workforce pool.

Placement data were derived from a records matching process facilitated through a data-sharing agreement between Commonwealth Corporation and the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

OF CTI STUDENTS



# DEMOGRAPHICS OF CTI STUDENTS

The data below offers insights into the demographic composition and various attributes of CTI students, encompassing factors such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, employment status at the time of enrollment, and additional characteristics. These data points yield valuable information regarding the makeup and distinctive characteristics of CTI students and the communities we serve.

Over the past year, the CTI student body has become more diverse, with the largest demographic being Hispanic/Latinx students (36%), followed by students who identify as "white" (decreasing from 41% in 2022 to 34% in 2023), and a notable rise in the percentage of Black/African-American students from 8% to 15%.

There is a near-even distribution between program participants who were either unemployed or underemployed before enrolling in CTI job training. This balance underscores the program's commitment to serving the needs of both these groups effectively, thus ensuring that CTI offers opportunities for a diverse range of individuals aiming for career advancement.

Across both groups, 73% of students were identified as low-income. This finding might be closely related to the fact that 84% of enrollees did not possess an associate's, bachelor's, or an advanced degree. It also underscores how CTI serves as a starting point in the educational journey of program participants toward securing meaningful employment.

Age	Age 17-24 Years Old Age 25-34 Years Old Age 35-44 Years Old Age 45-54 Years Old Age 55+ Years Old  Average Age Median Age	45% 27% 15% 9% 4% 29.5 yrs 26 yrs	Gender	Female Male Non-Binary/Other Not Disclosed	18% 80% 1% 1%
Race/Ethnicity Combined	American Indian/Alaska Native Asian Black/African American Hispanic/Latinx Multi-Racial Other/Not Disclosed White	1% 1% 15% 36% 8% 5% 34%	Employment Status at Enrollment	Unemployed Under-employed	48% 52%
Highest Level of Education	Less Than High School High School Diploma/HiSET/GED Some Postsecondary/College Associate Degree Bachelor Degree or Higher	2% 59% 23% 7% 9%	Other Characteristics	Persons with Disabilities Immigrant Language Not English Veterans Receiving Public Assistance Low Income <sup>4</sup> UI Claimant/Exhaustee	7% 25% 16% 3.7% 42% 73% 20%

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The numbers are derived from the consolidation of data pertaining to race and ethnicity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> 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.

#### INSPIRING NARRATIVES OF

### ACHIEVEMENT



#### Charting the Path to Success at Essex North Shore Through CTI Plumbing and HVAC Programs

In the vibrant halls of Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School, a story of transformation and opportunity unfolds as the school opens its door at night for adult learners as part of the NightHawks Adult Education program. The program, renowned for its CTI plumbing and HVAC offerings, recently embarked on a new chapter marked by significant funding and an expansion of its vocational training offerings.



Since the inception of the CTI program in 2020, the school has received a total of \$3,807,000 in grant funding to train workers for a variety of fields, including Automotive Technician, Biomanufacturing Lab Technician, Carpentry, HVAC, Plumbing, Welding, Manufacturing, Electrical, and Electronics Mechanical Technician.

Bonnie Carr, Director of Workforce Development at Essex North Shore, particularly highlights the success of their recent CTI Plumbing and HVAC. "They were great," says Carr. "Right now, the plumbing students are in the Tier 3 class, and some of the HVAC students are working with clean energy equipment and changing out gas furnaces for heat pump systems in some large projects. It shows the need for workers in the construction sector."

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers is projected to grow 6% from 2022 to 2032, faster than most other construction occupations. About 37,700 openings for heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers are projected each year, on average, over the decade. At the same time, employment of plumbers is projected to grow 2% with approximately 42,600 openings for plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters projected each year, on average, over the next decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

"The plumbing and HVAC sectors are substantial areas of construction with a growing need for skilled workers," says Carr. "Our students receive top-notch training aligned with industry demands and earn certifications that make them work-ready upon graduation. Essentially, our program acts as an economic driver for the state, serving in multiple capacities."

Carr envisions a program where each student's potential is not just recognized but actively nurtured, where the school's mission intertwines with the community's growth and individual success. "We work with local businesses and organizations and unions to determine where the workforce needs are," she says, "We take a look at the programs that we are able to offer based on the sectors that we have available after school in vocational and technical programs."

The partnerships forged by the school with local businesses and organizations breathe life into this vision. Carr said these collaborations aren't just about enhancing the programs' relevance; they are about opening doors, breaking down barriers, and creating pathways for real-world experience and employment.

Prior to entering the program, participant Tyler Huber worked at a local grocery store. He says the decision to enroll in the plumbing course at Essex North Shore marked a turning point in his life. "The CTI plumbing program was a game-changer for me," says Huber. "It was all about hands-on work – learning about piping, tools, and the real-world aspects of plumbing. Before joining the program, I didn't have much direction in my career, but this experience helped me get on track and boosted my career significantly. It's an excellent program, especially for those who are unsure about their future. I completed the program in December 2022, and now, I work at Maffei Sudden Services, a leap that I wouldn't have imagined before."

Transitioning from academia to a more hands-on vocational training, Brandon Glass's journey at Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School is a testament to the diverse paths students take to find their calling.

"In September 2022, I made a pivotal change from studying Economics and Finance in college to joining the CTI plumbing program at Essex North Shore," says Glass. This program aligned perfectly with my natural inclination toward practical work. It's been transformative, leading me to a fulfilling role at Addario's Services in Woburn and allowing me to dive deeply into a field I'm genuinely passionate about." As Carr and her team continue to outline their CTI success, one thing remains clear: Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School is more than just an institution. It's a community where confidence is built, skills are honed, and futures are forged. With every grant, every new program, and every graduating class, Essex North Shore reaffirms its commitment to being a beacon of vocational excellence, illuminating the path to success for generations to come.

#### COMMONWEALTH **CORPORATION**

### We thank you for your continued support.

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