



Qualitative Evaluation Report

FY2015-2016

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2016 New York City Labor Day Parade

Executive Summary

CWE 2015-2016 Qualitative Evaluation Report

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Introduction

This Executive Summary provides a condensed version of the data and findings of the fifth annual qualitative evaluation of three representative CWE-funded worker education and training programs in New York City:

Building Trades: Construction Skills

Community Based Organization: Make the Road New York

Union-based program: Workers United

The introduction to the evaluation includes information about CWE's **Jobs to Build On** Program, funded by the New York City Council. Since 2007, this allocation has provided City funds that leverage and multiply the workforce development impact of the support provided since 1985 by the New York State Department of Education.

The annual qualitative evaluation process includes: observation of classes, interviews with administrators and directors, focus groups with participants, and review of program documents. These perspectives add meaning and content to the quantitative data on participation, completion and outcomes.

During the 2015-16 program year, there were a total of 80,405 enrollments in 4,800 CWE classes, ranging from workplace ESL to Career and Technical training, Computer Skills, Job Readiness and Job Training. Career and Technical classes accounted for well over half of all classes offered, and together with computer skills, comprised over 65% of the total number of classes offered.

Evaluation: Qualitative data collected during each program visit is used to evaluate how and whether the programs being evaluated meet the outcomes defined for each of the three program types in initial focus groups with representative program directors (see appendix attached for a chart of these outcomes). To the quantitative participation and completion data collected on CWE programs, the qualitative evaluation brings the voices and experiences of New York City workers seeking good jobs and better lives for themselves and their families.

The Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills

“Our graduates are not only helping to shape New York’s skyline—they are building bright futures.” **Brochure, Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills (CS).** CS is a partnership among organized labor, union construction contractors, the NYC Department of Education, NYC School Construction Authority and the NY/NJPort Authority.

Purpose: Construction Skills is dedicated to preparing a trained and skilled workforce from diverse communities throughout the five boroughs for the unionized construction industry.

Population: High School graduates of New York City technical high schools and qualified adult residents of communities affected by Hurricane Sandy.

CWE Funding Use: CWE serves as the training provider for Construction Skills, hiring and paying instructors, designing training curriculum, and scheduling and overseeing the CS classes.

Achievements: During this program year, 135 HS grads (CS youth program) and 102 Sandy-impacted adults enrolled; 88% of the total enrolled completed CS training. Thus far, 71% of youth participants and 87% of Sandy-impacted adults have entered a unionized building trade. Other placements/outcomes are pending. Because close to 90% of CS participants are Black, Hispanic or Asian, CS has also contributed to diversification of the building trades. The CS program has an 80% retention rate among apprentices. *According to a study by Columbia faculty of the School of International and Public Affairs, Construction Skills is the most successful construction industry pre-apprenticeship program in the country.*

Evaluation: Construction Skills achieved all of the relevant outcomes common to Building Trade workers, and all of the applicable outcomes common among all CWE programs. As one participant said: *“I have a pension to look forward to, and . . . a great living wage. . . It just gives you so much pride, building something.”* (Jane Dickerson, CS graduate and member, NYC District Council of Carpenters)

Workers United

"The union's culture was always education, education, education. . . . Because we thought that the more people understood, the better union members they would be, and the better workers they would be, and that continues." **Edgar Romney, President, Workers United (WU).**

"The main thing we provide is that we are one of the few free English programs in New York City. . . . We have 400 people enrolled now and a waiting list." **Sherry Kane, Director, WU Education Program**

Purpose: The Workers United Education Program serves an immigrant worker population who need English language and computer skills to get jobs, or to get better jobs than the ones they currently have. The program grew out of the garment unions, which offered English classes and other services to their immigrant members. WU currently offers four levels of English and two levels of computer instruction.

Population: WU classes serve immigrant workers, some of whom are union members; the remainder are immigrants who understand that speaking English and using computers are required to take full advantage of opportunities in the U.S. As one said: "I'm coming because for me, English is very important, for your education and for your life. For everything you need English."

CWE Funding Use: CWE funds the WU education program.

Achievements: WU has two dedicated full-time teachers, both of whom are Master teachers with decades of experience with adult immigrant workers. One of them engages her upper level participants in essay writing, some of which have been published in a journal of the NYU Gallatin School showcasing the writing of adult learners. Participants are assessed annually and move up to the next level as their English improves. **Data from this program year shows that a majority of workers moved up to the next level in both computer and ESL classes. Both oral grammar and writing are assessed to determine placement.**

Evaluation: The WU program achieved all of the applicable outcome criteria common to all CWE programs and those common to all union programs.

Make the Road New York

“Make the Road New York aspires to fully integrate transformative education with the provision of survival and legal services that help families meet immediate needs. **Deborah Axt, Co-Executive Director, Make the Road New York (MRNY)**

“We had two MRNY Community Health workers as interns and ended up hiring both.” **Linda Nozart, Director, Woodhull Hospital Asthma Program and North Brooklyn Asthma Action Alliance**

Purpose: The mission of MRNY is to build the power of working class communities to achieve dignity and justice through organizing, policy innovation, transformative education, and survival services. MRNY is a community organization shaped by its efforts to provide workforce development in immigrant communities facing barriers of language and legal status that typically trap immigrant workers in low-paying jobs.

Population: Immigrant New Yorkers, 60% of whom are women. Forty percent of participants are dues-paying members of MRNY.

CWE Funding Use: CWE has supported three of MRNY’s key workforce development areas: **core job readiness** workshops which help workers create resumes, network and develop interview skills; **Community Health Worker Training**, including a Bridge to Health Class and a Community Health Worker Class; and **training for Worker Cooperatives** (including Pa’lante Green Cleaning; ACTO, a co-op of OSHA trainers, and training in the beauty industry for transgender members.

Achievements: Percentages of completers in CWE funded trainings in these areas were: 95% completed Community Health Worker Training; 83% completed Bridge to Health class; 95% completed OSHA trainings; 77% completed worker co-op development training; and 83% completed job readiness workshop series. The total number of participants enrolled in these training was 2220.

Evaluation: MRNY achieved all of the relevant outcomes for all CWE programs and all of those relevant to community-based organizations with the exception of achievement of computer skills. More common than computer use among MRNY participants is using smart phone technology.

Conclusion

Like generations before them, participants in the classes described in this evaluation seek an economic foothold in a City that has historically welcomed and benefitted from the skills and dreams of its workers. The quotes below are taken from an article in a special issue of the New York Times Sunday magazine focused on the construction of the City's newest skyscrapers on the Hudson. All of the workers quoted in the article belong to New York City Building Trades unions and trained in apprenticeship programs jointly sponsored by the Building Trades and Construction Council of Greater New York. Their words provide examples of how investment in worker training and education re-imagines, recreates, and renews not only the skyline, but also the opportunities available to workers that lie at the heart of the City.

“This is a historic place. It makes me feel good to know I’m helping to rebuild it. It’s a permanent mark in the city. Twenty, thirty years from now I’m gonna be walking by and say to my kids, my grandkids, ‘I helped build that.’ **Jesse Gillespie, 22, Plumber 3 World Trade Center**

“I do production welding. I also worked on Tower 1, and you can’t get a better view anywhere in the world. The best part for me is looking at the finished product. I think, we made that; Tower 1! It’s like the feather in the cap.” **Derek Dixon, Ironworker, 51, 3 World Trade Center.**

“I love working up here. Makes me feel like I’m building America back up. I love the view and the freedom.” **Scott Small, 55, Laborer, 3 World Trade Center**

“I wanted to be an air traffic controller. But I got into this, and I never imagined I would fall in love with it. When I’m up at the top and the wind is blowing at me and I’m on a lift six inches from the edge and I’m holding a four-inch pipe or its thundering and raining or I’m testing the pumps to the water towers . . . I’m thinking, Hey, I’m just doing my job.” **Myriam Giraldo, Plumber, 10 Hudson Yards.**

(Quotes above appear in The New York Times Magazine, Sunday, June 5, 2016, page 54-65. Special Issue, High Life, focusing on the tallest buildings in New York.)

APPENDIX ONE:

Common Findings Across all 3 CWE Funded Program Types based on Focus Group Research in 2011:

- CWE Funding Saves Jobs
- CWE Funding Helps Workers Acquire and Update Computer/Technological Skills
- CWE Funding Transforms the Life Chances of Individuals and Benefits Families and Communities
- CWE Funding Enables Movement Up Sector Specific Career Ladders
- CWE's Model Differs from Standard Adult Education Practice
- CWE Funding Gives Workers Opportunities to Enter Jobs with Good Wages and Promising Futures
- CWE Support Enables a More Effective Mix of Employment Preparation Options
- CWE Providers have Honed Best Practices across a Range of Industries, Populations, and Communities.

Focus Group Findings by Program Type

Type of Program	Union based/ Labor-Management programs	Building Trade Apprenticeships	Community-Based Organizations
Type Specific Findings	CWE funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saves jobs • Supports industry-driven programs • Transforms lives • Supports career advancement • CWE's work-focused education attracts and retains workers • CWE classes strengthen generic work skills 	CWE Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports entry into the building trades • Maintains employment as certifications and licensing change • Supports diversity in the trades • Provides a support system for lifelong career training 	CWE Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps us serve the hardest to employ populations • Provides more intensive services to those who need them <p>Helps community providers serve those they would not otherwise reach</p>

