



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

**THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN:
INVESTING IN TOMORROW'S
WORKFORCE**

September 2024

The American Rescue Plan (ARP), through the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), provided \$350 billion to over 30,000 state, local, Tribal, and territorial government governments across the country to support both their immediate needs in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and their longer-term efforts to build a strong recovery. These funds can be used for a wide variety of eligible uses, including to support and expand the workforce with a particular focus on assisting people that have barriers to employment.

More than 2,000 governments across the country have invested more than \$13 billion in SLFRF funds to [support and expand their workforces](#). The below success stories are just a few examples of the many ways that governments across the country are leveraging their investments in preparation for the jobs created by the President’s Investing in America agenda, including the American Rescue Plan, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), CHIPS and Science Act, and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Recipient governments interested in learning more about how they can enact similar programs to support their workers can reference the White House’s [playbook](#), “Workforce Solutions that Work” as well as the examples included in the [quarterly reporting analyses](#) that Treasury publishes on its website.

Wisconsin’s Worker Advancement Initiative

The state of Wisconsin has put **\$20 million** in [ARP funds](#) towards its [Worker Advancement Initiative](#) (WAI), a [program](#) that serves people whose previous employment has not come back post-pandemic, as well as those who were not able to gain employment prior to the pandemic, by offering subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers.

Leveraging the existing relationships that local workforce development boards have with local employers and service providers, WAI grantees target the unique needs of the underserved populations and high-demand industries in their communities. Examples included individuals involved in the justice system, individuals who are in or have aged out of foster care, non-custodial or single parents, the long-term unemployed, veterans, Tribal members, individuals with disabilities, retired individuals and individuals aged 55 and older, and individuals living with or in recovery from substance abuse disorders, among many others.

WAI grant projects include substantial supportive and wraparound services to enable participation in work-based and classroom-based training programs. These programs simultaneously provide new skills, direct connections to local employers and wage subsidies for participation hours, thereby immediately helping to improve the economic standing of grant participants and helping to reduce inequities in opportunities in the future.

Grants were awarded to all eleven of Wisconsin’s regional Workforce Development Boards to support this program in amounts ranging from \$487,000 to \$5.3 million.

One Wisconsin nonprofit that received SLFRF funding through its local workforce development board was WRTP | BIG STEP. WRTP | [BIG STEP](#) has operated for more than 50 years to enhance the ability of public and private sector organizations to recruit, develop, and retain a more diverse, qualified workforce in construction, manufacturing, and emerging sectors of the region, with a focus on individualized tutoring in academic skills for apprenticeship exams. Braiding ARP dollars together with the Department of Labor’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, BIG STEP was able to continue its work connecting people to family-sustaining jobs.

Wisconsin Workforce Success Stories

Jonathon Barba is currently a carpenter with VJS Construction Services, a full-service commercial construction firm located in Pewaukee, WI.

At the age of 16, Jonathon found himself facing unexpected challenges when he learned he was going to be a father. Amidst his struggles, Jonathon discovered WRTP | BIG STEP's Summer Trades Program, which offered him hope and a pathway to a brighter future. Engaging with the program, Jonathon's passion for construction was reignited, drawing from his previous experiences and involvement in construction during high school.

Through the Summer Trades Program, Jonathon received invaluable exposure to the carpentry trade, visiting union training centers, and gaining hands-on experience. Fueled by his newfound passion, Jonathon set his sights on becoming a carpenter. With the support and guidance of WRTP | BIG STEP, he navigated the complexities of the job market, leveraging his skills and determination to secure a position with VJS Construction Services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, [Tonda Thompson](#) sought to craft a table that was resilient enough to keep up with her family's needs. But what began as a DIY project, quickly evolved into something far greater. Within a week of posting her newly built table on social media, Tonda had received several order requests for custom built tables. After word of her craftsmanship spread across the internet, Tonda began operating as [She Slangs Wood Co. \(SSW\)](#). Today [She Slangs Wood](#) functions as a multifaceted business: In her shop, Tonda and her team of youth apprentices specialize in woodworking and furniture making. And in the community, SSW serves as a haven for women and men of all ages, where Tonda teaches sustainable skills to combat negative social determinates of health and instill confidence in our communities' future leaders. Tonda's civic engagement extend far beyond furniture; she's in the business of empowerment.

Being one of the few Black-women carpenters in the country comes with a unique set of challenges, but Tonda remains empowered to pursue her passion with the support of her family and community. The partnership between [She Slangs Wood](#) and [Employ Milwaukee](#) that began in 2022 has yielded great results. With the help of the [Skillful Transitions \(WAI\)](#) grant, Tonda was able to keep her business alive by taking on more apprentices and acquiring a new workshop space.

Multi-pronged Approach in Idaho

The State of [Idaho](#) has invested **\$50 million** in "Leading Idaho," which consists of four components designed to 1) identify and align workforce training to high quality jobs, 2) invest in infrastructure, equipment, and curriculum to provide the training, 3) provide financial assistance to Idahoans to access the training, and 4) improve technology resources that connect individuals to jobs – including work-based learning.

One of those components includes the Workforce Training Talent Pipeline Management, which is an employer-led strategy to build real career pathways aligned to dynamic business needs developed by the [US Chamber of Commerce Foundation](#). The TPM initiative is a workforce strategy helping regions across the country meet the needs of today's changing business environment. It is a demand-driven, employer-led approach to close the skills gap that builds pipelines of talent aligned to dynamic business needs. [As of June 30, 2023](#), there were **16 employer collaboratives** statewide working to align training and recruit underserved populations to job openings.

Another one of Leading Idaho's components is [Idaho Launch](#), which provides financial assistance for approved job training programs to qualifying individuals and industries impacted by the pandemic. It includes technology improvements to increase public access and community outreach and engagement activities to encourage qualifying individuals and industries to use the assistance. Data from the first year of the Idaho Launch program showed average wage increases for participants of over \$10,000 one year after they started the program, and as of June 30, 2023, the **number of workers enrolled in sectorial job training programs was 3,960, and the number of workers completing sectorial job training programs was 2,789.**

Regional Collaboration in Maricopa County, Arizona

Maricopa County, Arizona, and its cities of Phoenix and Mesa are an example of how three different governments in the same region are all working individually as well as together to help advance the workforce needs of their community.

The City of Phoenix and the County of Maricopa are working together on the [Route to Relief](#) program through the Maricopa County Community College (MCCC) network. The City of Phoenix has allocated almost **\$10 million** for their part of the program, which [provided](#) individuals whose income had been impacted by the pandemic with tuition, monthly stipends, and employment assistance while they were enrolled in eligible occupational training programs in the MCCC network.

Maricopa County is investing more than \$20 million into various projects related to its workforce, including **\$9.9 million** for its [Career, College, and Credential Initiative](#). As the county noted in its Recovery Plan, “Maricopa County is using funding to provide programs that will help workers obtain credentials and education from a variety of sources that will lead them to long-term employment in high-demand industries, as defined by the County’s Workforce Development Board. Although traditional university degree programs can achieve good employment outcomes for many, the goal of this program is to support individuals seeking work in trades by attending trade schools or community colleges, and help workers obtain better jobs through certification programs.”

Maricopa has also invested \$12 million in its [Apprenticeship Expansion Program](#). As the county [noted](#), “The apprenticeship opportunities will direct participants to career pathways that support the major industry drivers of the local economy, including construction, healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing.” The county [estimates](#) that the program will support a total of 3,000 people finding apprenticeships through 2026.

Another example from the region comes from Mesa, Arizona, which is investing more than \$12 million of their SLFRF funds to support local workers, including **\$250,000** for the Mesa Workforce – Jobs Access [Center](#). This Workforce Development/Jobs Access Center is “a partnership between the City of Mesa, Maricopa County, and A New Leaf and will be focused on the response side of jobs training for low- to moderate-income households (including those impacted financially by the pandemic) and for those in human services programs supported by the City of Mesa and/or are part of the Housing Path to Recovery.”

Maricopa County, Arizona Workforce Success Stories

Dustin, a walk-in client, visited the Workforce Center @ Mesa for support with his resume and job search. A Maricopa County Workforce Development Coordinator assisted with his resume, and it just so happened that her colleague from A New Leaf was meeting with a representative from Motel 6, who was looking for a front desk customer service representative. They learned that Dustin had customer service experience and had worked with several hotels throughout the area. Dustin was interviewed and hired on the spot. He also received a free 31-day bus pass from A New Leaf to assist him in getting to his new job as a Front Desk Customer Service Representative.



Sierra English said about all she had before her electrical apprenticeship was a “beat down car that barely ran.” Now she’s an instructor at Phoenix Electrical and a homeowner, one of hundreds of women getting into trade schools via tuition-supported apprenticeships, like the ones Maricopa County offers.

Detroit, Michigan's Investments in Workforce

The City of Detroit has invested more than **\$134 million** of SLFRF funds into programs to support its local workforce.

One of those programs is [JumpStart](#), which is “designed to help long-term unemployed Detroit residents reengage in the job market. Well established community-based organizations will conduct outreach to identify and connect these residents to opportunities for education, workforce training and supportive services.” As of July 2024, Detroit had invested **\$31.6 million** into the program, more than 1,800 participants have enrolled in JumpStart, and 280 participants have completed a job placement.

Detroit has also invested a combined almost **\$75 million** in its Skills for Life program, which includes both an “education” and a “work” component. The “work” side of the program offers assistance with resume building, obtaining diplomas or credentials, and supportive services such as transportation and childcare. The “education” side of the program assists participants with measurable skills gains, high school completion/GED attainment, occupational training programs, obtaining an industry-recognized credential, and other skill- and career-building activities.



Community organization leaders attend a meeting with ARPA Coordinator and Senior Advisor to the President Gene Sperling, Mayor Duggan, administration staff and City Council members as part of the launch of Jump Start, a first-of-its-kind ARPA funded education, job training and employment program - January 2023.

Connecticut's Investments in Fast-Growing Sectors

The State of Connecticut has invested \$77 million in [Career ConneCT](#), which was designed to enable unemployed and underemployed people, especially those whose employment was impacted by the pandemic, to acquire the skills for good jobs that support themselves and their families. [Career ConneCT](#) is a collaborative effort that includes Connecticut's Office of Workforce Strategy and [regional workforce development boards](#) to provide multiple pathways to participate in short-term (typically 5- to 20-week) training in fast-growing labor sectors, including manufacturing, IT, healthcare and clean energy. These training programs lead to industry-recognized credentials and entry-level employment in high-quality career pathways. The program also provides access to career pathway exploration for high school students. As of June 30, 2024, **nearly 5,000 residents have been enrolled in workforce training programs and 3,028 have completed programs**. Over 1,500 residents have been placed into employment.

Conclusion

The examples given above are just some of the many ways that recipients of Treasury's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds have invested their awards into supporting their local workforces. More examples can be found in the White House's "[Playbook: Workforce Investments that Work](#)" as well as in the quarterly reporting analyses that Treasury [publishes](#) every quarter providing updates on how SLFRF is being put to work in communities across the country.

