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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 2026

TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning has awarded \$1.48 million in total grant funding to four organizations working to expand construction career access for women and minority residents across the state. The funding is through a [second FY26 round](#) of the [New Jersey Builders Utilization Initiative for Labor Diversity's](#) (NJBUILD) Women and Minorities in Construction Trades grant program (WMIC).

The WMIC supports pre-apprenticeship training, wraparound supportive services, and job placement assistance designed to reduce financial and systemic barriers that have historically limited diversity in the building and construction industry.

“New Jersey’s construction industry is strongest when it reflects the communities it serves,” **said Acting Labor Commissioner Kevin D. Jarvis.** “These grants represent our continued commitment to breaking down barriers and creating accessible pathways to high-quality careers in the trades.”

The NJBUILD program funds training that prepares participants for entry into Registered Apprenticeships or direct placement into full-time construction employment, while also providing critical supportive services to ensure participants succeed both during training and after job placement.

“These grants represent an investment in proven models that work,” **said Jessica Richardson, NJDOL’s Chief of NJBUILD and Special Initiatives.** “It’s about more than just training – it’s about setting people up for long-term success in construction careers.”

Since FY19, NJDOL has invested more than \$24.5 million through NJBUILD to train more than 2,500 women and minority New Jersey residents for careers in the building and construction trades.

[New Beginnings Behavioral Health](#), an NJBUILD grantee, received funding to connect community members with construction career training and apprenticeship opportunities. The organization recently hosted an orientation to introduce participants to careers in the skilled trades. While the program anticipated serving 15 participants, 77 individuals attended, demonstrating significant community demand for construction career pathways.

“One of the most encouraging highlights was the significant number of women who participated, reflecting a growing interest in pursuing careers in a field where women have historically been underrepresented,” **said Amir Khan, CEO and founder of New Beginnings Behavioral Health.** “We are grateful to the New Jersey Department of Labor for its investment in workforce development and for helping us expand access to meaningful career opportunities. The overwhelming response reinforces the importance of continuing to build strong partnerships with employers, apprenticeship programs, and community organizations to create lasting opportunities for the individuals, families, and communities we serve.”

With funding from NJBUILD, the [Rutgers Employment Success Program](#), under Rutgers University’s Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT), will work alongside community organizations, labor unions, employers, and industry experts to connect participants to construction career opportunities.

“As experienced tradespeople retire, and demand for skilled workers continues to grow, we’re challenged not only to fill critical workforce needs, but to inspire a new generation to see the skilled trades as careers of purpose, stability, and long-term opportunity. Expanding participation among women and minorities isn’t simply about broadening access – it’s about recognizing talent that has often been overlooked and ensuring our future workforce reflects the full strength of our communities,” **said Todd Pisani, Director of the Rutgers Employment Success Program.** “I am thankful that NJDOL has remained consistent in this shared value and supports our efforts to continue this critical community-centered work.”

The complete list of grantees is below:

FY26 Round 2 NJBUILD Women and Minorities in Construction			
Grantee	Occupations	Amount	# to be Trained

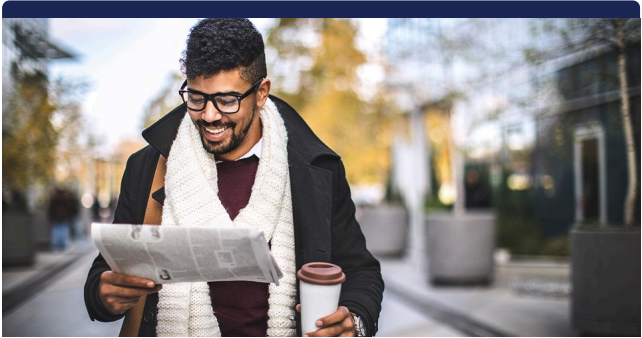
East Orange School District	Construction Trades	\$375,000	25
Elizabeth Development Company	CDL, Truck Driver Electrical Assistant, HVAC, Plumbing	\$430,748	35
New Beginnings Behavioral Health	Electrical, HVAC, Weatherization	\$300,000	20
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey	Carpentry, Construction	\$375,000	25
Total:		\$1,480,748	105

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