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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 27, 2023

**TRENTON** – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) today announced the investment of \$10 million to expand apprenticeship training centers to meet the growing need for skilled workers as New Jersey experiences an unprecedented surge in infrastructure and public works initiatives.

In partnership with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA), NJDOL's funding will support the expansion or development of new training facilities. Under an MOU among NJDOL and NJEDA, NJEDA will develop a competitive program that will solicit proposals from entities based in New Jersey that are affiliated with a successful USDOL Registered Apprenticeship.

The MOU will also enable a deepened and expanded collaboration between the two agencies across a range of workforce and economic development initiatives, to reduce barriers to training and employment and help employers retain qualified workers.

"Ensuring the proper training of New Jersey's skilled workers is essential to the successful development of our infrastructure and public works," said Governor Murphy. "This investment towards building out our state's apprenticeship training facilities will provide our skilled workers 21st-century, state of the art facility environments tailored to their learning needs. I thank DOL Commissioner Rob Asaro-Angelo and EDA CEO Tim Sullivan for their continued dedication to New Jersey's workforce development programs."

"Apprenticeship is deeply rooted in the construction trades, and with the rising demand for these skilled workers, we must ensure these critical occupations continue to flourish so New Jersey can meet its infrastructure and economic goals," said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo, who made the announcement this morning at an event hosted by Pathways to Apprenticeship New Jersey in Newark to cap off National Apprenticeship Week, which was November 13 through 19. "I am grateful to Governor Murphy for his commitment to our state's workforce, and for our partnership with the NJEDA that will be integral to getting these funds to those who will train new apprentices and expand available training curriculums."

"Under Governor Murphy's leadership, New Jersey continues to make major investments in the next generation of workers," said NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan. "The joint effort between the NJDOL and NJEDA will help keep our state competitive and strengthen our economy, while preparing workers with the training and skills needed for career opportunities in the construction trades."

This initial funding seeks to build capacity to respond to the increasing demand of infrastructure growth by investing in facilities, equipment, and expertise, with the expectation of supporting the construction or expansion of several sizable new training centers, each with the capacity to train hundreds of skilled workers per year.

Applicants will be required to be in the construction trades and affiliated with at least one USDOL Registered Apprenticeship program.

A strong focus on diversity and inclusion in the training centers is a touchstone commitment of this initiative to both strengthen the construction trades and increase equity and fairness in our economy. Particular weight will be given to proposals demonstrating a plan and ability to train underserved populations, or that strategically locate facilities near public transportation hubs to alleviate transportation barriers to training and employment.

Applications for this grant funding will be accepted by NJEDA in 2024.

Since Governor Murphy took office in January 2018, the state has invested more than \$50 million in developing apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and work-based programs, contributing to the creation of 632 new Registered Apprenticeship programs – a 100 percent increase – and the onboarding of 16,891 new apprentices. The state currently has 8,788 active apprentices in 1,243 programs.

For more information on NJDOL's Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning, visit: [apprenticeship.nj.gov](https://apprenticeship.nj.gov).

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