

WORKFORCE WEBINAR SERIES

Developing and Maintaining Workforce and Equity Partnerships

Office of Wastewater Management

Office of Water

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

September 15, 2021

**We will start in a couple minutes.
Thank you.**

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Webinar Logistics

- This webinar is being recorded
- Participants will be in listen-only mode
- To submit a question, use the Q&A function
- Presenters will monitor these questions and respond to as many as possible during the “Q&A” session at the end of the presentation.



- Webinar slides and recording information will be sent out to all participants following the webinar

Having Audio Difficulties?

- Call in to any of these phone numbers:

+1 669 254 5252

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+1 646 828 7666

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Webinar ID: 160 177 3761

Opening Poll: Please indicate the sector that you work in:

- Utility
- State or Local Government
- Federal Government
- Consultant
- Academia/Educator
- Other

If you do not see a poll window pop up, please use the **Chat function** to type in your answer.

Water Sector Workforce at EPA

- Reminders:
 - Check out our website for resources and updates:
<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-water-infrastructure/water-sector-workforce>
 - Workforce Initiative
 - Past Workforce Webinars
 - Workforce Case Studies
 - Stay tuned for information on our next webinar. If you are registered for this webinar you are automatically on the email list for future webinars!

September 15, 2021

Developing and Maintaining Workforce and Equity Partnerships

Jim Horne, Sustainable Utilities Program Manager, U.S. EPA Office of Wastewater Management



September 15, 2021

Speakers:



Andy Kricun, Managing Director,
Moonshot Missions



Candi Jones, Assistant Deputy
Commissioner – HR, Philadelphia
Water Department

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Working Toward Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in New Jersey's Water Workforce

ANDREW KRICUN, P.E

MANAGING DIRECTOR, MOONSHOT MISSIONS

SENIOR FELLOW, US WATER ALLIANCE

SEPTEMBER 15, 2021



The old paradigm for water utilities was:

- ▶ Permit compliance as the ceiling of aspirations
- ▶ Minimize contact with regulators, community and media



Conversely, the new paradigm for the Clean Water Utility of the Future is:

- ▶ Using permit compliance as a given and the floor of aspirations
- ▶ Recruiting and cultivating a workforce that is diverse, equitable, inclusive, and technologically capable
- ▶ Striving to be an environmental champion and an anchor institution in the community they serve

Ensuring a diverse, equitable and inclusive water workforce is of the most important ways that a water utility can serve as an anchor institution in its community

- ▶ There is innate equity in ensuring that the water workforce reflects the community it is serving
- ▶ A workforce that reflects and represents its community is much more likely to act in a manner that is consistent with community benefit and environmental justice
- ▶ Conversely, a community is more likely to place its faith in a utility when it encounters a workforce that includes its members

The Water Sector's Workforce Challenge... and Opportunity

- ▶ The Brookings Institute recently reported that as many as 50% of the public water sector's workforce was eligible for retirement within the next 5 years
- ▶ This represents a challenge to water utilities to find replacement workers to ensure continued operations and performance
- ▶ The flip side of challenge is opportunity; there is now a tremendous window of opportunity to build the water workforce with more representation from the host communities
- ▶ Working in water provides well paying, steady, challenging, and meaningful employment to make our communities more sustainable for all

New Jersey's Exciting New Water Workforce Collaborative

Jersey Water Works, a statewide water equity initiative, has been working with several partners to develop a statewide water workforce program:

- ▶ NJ Association of Environmental Authorities
- ▶ NJ Association of Community Colleges
- ▶ NJ Environmental Justice Advisory Council
- ▶ Water Environment Federation

NJ's Water Workforce Initiative (continued)

- ▶ Using Baywork's successful program as a model, the NJAEA will work with the NJACC to develop a core curriculum for entry into the water sector
- ▶ the NJACC will also seek to have completion of the curriculum go toward completion of an associate's degree
- ▶ Jersey Water Works and NJ EJAC will work together to funnel candidates from the utilities' communities into the corresponding community college's water sector curriculum

Additional Opportunities

- ▶ The NJ Water Workforce Collaborative will also work with County Work Investment Boards to seek their help in funneling unemployed members of a utility's host community into the community college program.... or directly to the water utility depending on the individual's experience
- ▶ In addition, the Collaborative will work on a parallel program to help newly hired community members with a path forward within the utility itself.
- ▶ We don't want a new hire to be the end of the story, but just the first chapter

Status of the Initiative



- ▶ Partners Assembled
- ▶ Working to adapt Baywork curriculum for NJ program
- ▶ Seeking funding for community candidates
- ▶ Working with Workforce Investment Boards to funnel candidates to the program

Conclusions

- ▶ Clean water utilities can, and should, strive to be environmental champions and anchor institutions on their communities
- ▶ Our water utilities are most equitable and effective when their water workforce is inclusively representative of the communities that they serve
- ▶ The NJ Water Workforce Collaborative is working on a model workforce equity initiative that, hopefully, can serve as a template for replication in other states as well

Thanks for listening

If you would like more information, please contact:

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Advancing Diversity & Developing Career Pathway Partnerships for a Greener Future

PHILADELPHIA
WATER
— DEPARTMENT —

Candi B. Jones, MPA, SHRM-CP
Assistant Deputy Commissioner, HR
Philadelphia Water Department



PHILADELPHIA
WATER
— DEPARTMENT —

We provide the City with integrated water, wastewater, and stormwater services

Vision: To become America's model 21st century urban water utility



- ▶ Sustainable career pathway initiatives are critical to ensuring PWD continues to provide the highest level of service to our customers
 - ▶ Growing our partnership and building a talent pipeline
 - ▶ Impact of PowerCorps at PWD
 - ▶ Philadelphia School District as a Resource
 - ▶ Support and Supplemental Education
 - ▶ The Mentorship Program
 - ▶ Where we are headed
 - ▶ GAP year programs
 - ▶ Intern to Hire Programming
 - ▶ Upskilling Employees through tuition reimbursement

PWD & PowercorpPHL | PARTNERSHIP

- Partnership established in 2013 with focus on green stormwater infrastructure maintenance: Green City, Clean Waters
- Targets: young adults and returning citizens 18-28
- Mutual Commitment-City and Utility leadership collaboration was essential to success.
- Key developments:
 - Establishment of implementation strategy, SOP and training
 - PWD support – personnel, materials, logistic support
 - Advocacy and development of green jobs





PWD & Philadelphia School District | PARTNERSHIP

- Aligning Philadelphia School District Career and Technical Education Courses with Apprenticeship opportunities
- Leveraging the education provided to HS Sophomores, Junior and Seniors to provide a pathway into PWD careers
 - CADD
 - Construction
 - Electronics
 - Engineering



Orleans
TECHNICAL COLLEGE



GSI PARTNERS™
REIMAGINING STORMWATER

Workforce
Development

- The Mentorship Program
- Technical Schools & Supplemental Education
- Alignment of Civil Service Hiring Process

Impact of Partnerships

63% have transitioned into permanent employees with PWD

92% diverse candidates

10 current apprentices employed

- 3 – GSI infrastructure
- 3 – Engineering Aide
- 1 – Electronic Technician
- 3 – Utility Crane





Increased Targeted Recruitment

- Sourcing from our Veteran Population
 - Veteran's preference points in the Civil Service
- Targeted recruiting Female Employees
- Building Capacity in our workforce to support Diversity and Inclusion



Leveraging
partnerships with
City of Philadelphia
High Schools:
GAP YEAR
PROGRAM

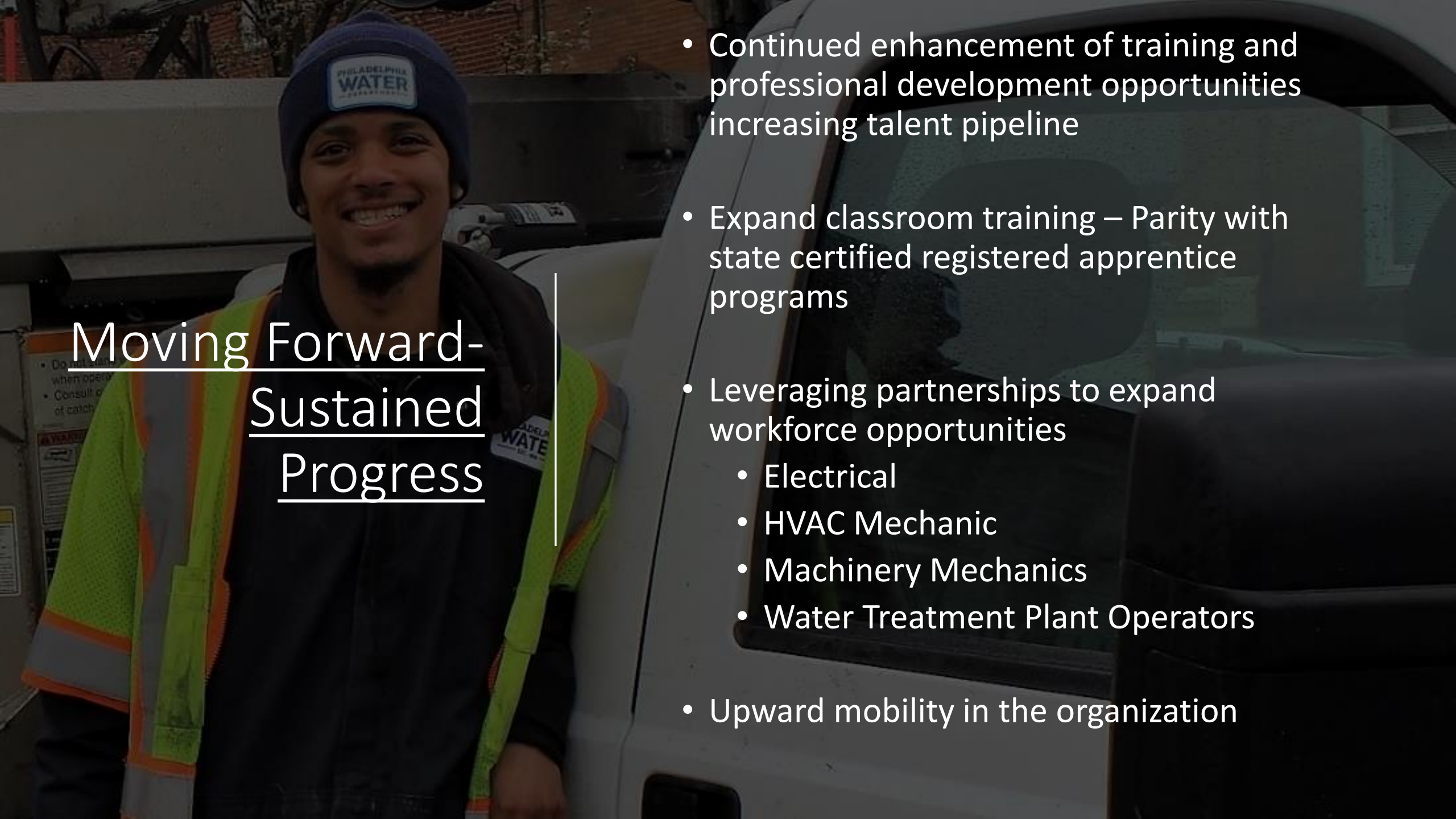


- Construction & Manufacturing
 - Architectural Drafting Design
 - Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD)
 - Engineering Technologies
- Natural Sciences & Biotechnology
 - Natural Resource Management
 - Biotechnology

Practical work experience

Advisory Support

Sustained relationship with the department during the continuation of education

A smiling man wearing a blue beanie with the Philadelphia Water Department logo, a dark jacket, and a high-visibility yellow safety vest. He is standing next to a white van. The background shows a brick wall and some equipment.

Moving Forward- Sustained Progress

- Continued enhancement of training and professional development opportunities increasing talent pipeline
- Expand classroom training – Parity with state certified registered apprentice programs
- Leveraging partnerships to expand workforce opportunities
 - Electrical
 - HVAC Mechanic
 - Machinery Mechanics
 - Water Treatment Plant Operators
- Upward mobility in the organization

Contact Me!

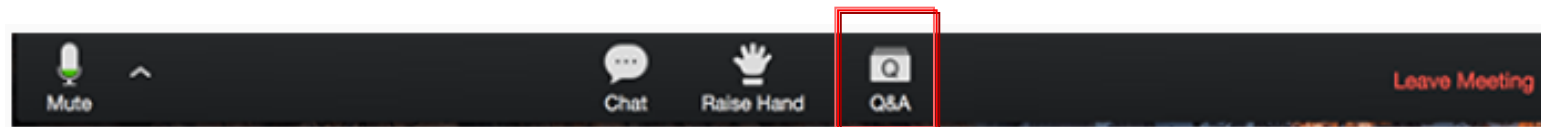
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Q&A Session

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Closing Poll #1

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best score and 1 being the worst, how would you rate today's webinar?

If you do not see a poll window pop up, please use the **Chat function** to type in your answer.

Closing Poll #2

Finally, what other topics would you like to see covered in subsequent webinars?

Please type a brief response in the chat box.



Thank you!

