



**COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 11a

**BRIEFING ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** July 9, 2024

**DATE:** July 2, 2024  
**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director  
**FROM:** Anna Pavlik, Director, Workforce Development  
**SUBJECT:** **2023 Workforce Development Annual Report**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

For too long, people of color have not had fair access and opportunities to the quality, family-wage jobs of port-related industries. As a significant economic driver in our region, the Port is well positioned to address this inequity. This is why we are investing in workforce development pathways. Not only does this work align with our values, but our investment in this work ensures the success and future of port-related industries. Additionally, we know that diversity, equity, and inclusion create more successful businesses and healthier communities.

In 2023, the Port continued to grow our investments in regional workforce development at \$3.5M, with a significant increase (38%) in funding maritime, green jobs, and aviation programs from the prior year. Port investments resulted in 203 people trained in high-demand, high-wage occupations like General Carpenter pre-apprenticeship, Aviation Maintenance Technician, Advanced Logistics, and 1,012 trained at SEA Airport in job readiness and career advancement training like Homeland Security, food handlers, Microsoft Office, badge training, etc. Over 2,069 people obtained employment at the airport, in construction and maritime careers, thanks to Port investments in 2023.

Structurally excluded individuals – such as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants and refugees, and women – received the largest benefit from these training and employment services. In 2023, 83% served with Port-funded training and career services were BIPOC and 76% lived in low equity areas of King County. Among those obtaining jobs, 44% identified as women.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2020, the Port of Seattle Commission adopted the Workforce Development Policy Directive (Resolution No. 3776) to fulfill the Century Agenda’s strategic objective of advancing regional workforce development in port-related industries to provide equitable access to quality careers. Resolution No. 3776 sets a goal for increasing equitable access to economic prosperity and leveraging Port impact and innovation. Resolution No. 3776 also requires staff to provide an annual report to the Port Commission.

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The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County's Workforce Dynamics dashboard shows that "income disparities in King County are vast and fall along racial lines. King County enjoys higher incomes than the state or national averages, but this relative prosperity is concentrated among the white population. The greatest income disparities in King County are concentrated in ZIP codes in South King County, home to the majority of the region's BIPOC communities." In addition to the structural barriers to success that BIPOC communities face, it is well documented that the demographics of workers in port-related industries do not reflect the demographics of our region.

This report details the Port's progress in addressing social and racial barriers that create wealth gaps in our region, highlighting both successes and challenges. Port investments increase economic opportunities for structurally excluded communities, yet continued dialogue, investments, and capacity building with our stakeholders is needed to achieve fairness and prosperity for all.

### **2023 RESULTS**

In 2023, the Port of Seattle's workforce development investments resulted in:

- 2,069 job, internship, and apprenticeship placements, a 22% increase from 2022.
- Hourly wage at placement in aviation averaged \$20.03, a 6% increase from 2022.
- Hourly wage for construction placements averaged \$32.37, a 40% increase from 2022.
- Most participants supported by the Port's workforce development efforts (83%) were Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).
- 76% of the participants live in low equity areas of King County.
- 117 employers hired program participants or provided youth career connected learning opportunities.

In addition to employers, other important partners in the Port's workforce development efforts included community-based organizations, other public agencies, and the regional workforce development system.

### **Aviation Sector**

In 2023, SEA totaled nearly 50.9 million passengers – up 11% from the previous year. This increase in travel, along with the great work of community partners and an increased number of airport tenants, likely boosted the number of people hired in the aviation sector in 2023 using Port workforce investments.

### **Airport Employment Center**

Port Jobs operates the Airport Employment Center and placed 1,594 people in jobs in 2023, reflecting the continued increase in air travel. Some individuals were hired into multiple positions, with a total of 1,978 job placements in 2023, an increase of 34% from 2022. Ninety-three airport employers hired workers via the Airport Employment Center, up from 82 in 2022. In addition, 902 airport workers completed 1,012 trainings, which is a significant increase from 2022 in the number of people trained (84% increase) and the number of trainings (77% increase).

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In 2023, the Airport Employment Center provided services to SEA airport companies to fill open positions and to support community members, SEA employees, and laid-off employees in finding employment and building skills for career advancement. Port Jobs services included:

- A “Hotlist” of job openings at SEA Airport available online and sent weekly to community-based organizations and colleges.
- In-person, open interview events in partnership with airport companies at SEA.
- In-person and remote job search assistance, including support for recent refugees and immigrants.
- Job readiness training such as Security Identification Display Area (SIDA) badge training preparation to help English language learners pass the updated SIDA badge training requirement.
- Free college classes for career pathways and skill building.

<b>2023 Aviation Impact</b>			
<b>Airport Employment Center</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Job placements	1,211	1,479	1,978
Average hourly wage @ placement	\$17.02	\$18.82	\$20.03
Hiring employers	80	82	93
Training enrollments-includes SIDA support	247	539	1,093
Training completions-includes SIDA support	200	573	1,012
<b>Aviation Career Pathways: Aviation Maintenance Technician</b>			
Training enrollments	23	18	25
Training completions	17	11	15

**Participant demographics:** 83% BIPOC (24% Asian, 43% African/African American/Black, 9% Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 6% Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian), 13% White, and 4% Other; 55% male, 45% female; 73% from structurally excluded ZIP codes (low or very low on the Port’s Equity Index).

**Types of jobs:** 43% airline operations/passenger support, 22% restaurant operations, 20% janitorial, 7% warehouse/freight, 5% retail operations, 2% security, and 1% skilled trades.

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**Multicultural Airport Employment Support**

To augment the outreach and training work conducted by Port Jobs, the Port partnered with Partner in Employment (PIE) to reach 656 job seekers from immigrant and refugee communities who are also Limited English Proficient (LEP). PIE is an experienced community organization that provides language services and culturally competent information to job seekers from refugee and immigrant communities, ensuring comprehensive job search support.

**Aviation Career Pathways: Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT)**

The Port of Seattle, Port Jobs, and South Seattle College have partnered since 2021 to offer an Introduction to Aviation Maintenance Technology (AMT) course at SEA. This 12-week college preparatory course exposes participants to the AMT profession and prepares them for the college’s longer 2-year FAA-approved AMT program. The 25 participants in 2023 were 91% BIPOC, 21% women, and were primarily airport workers in entry jobs such as ramp agents, fuelers, taxi/ride-share drivers, and food service workers. They gain valuable math and study skills, financial aid support, and a \$1,000 scholarship from Port Jobs’ Alaska Airlines-Airport University. Aviation maintenance technician positions are in high demand and can pay salaries over \$85,000.

**Aviation Career Pathways: Ground Service Equipment Training Program (GSE)**

In partnership with South Seattle College and Port Jobs, the Port launched a new workforce development initiative in 2023 — the Airport Ground Service Equipment (GSE) Training Program. This exciting new offering follows the same model as the AMT program, meaning the training takes place on-site at SEA, prioritizes current SEA airport workers, and participants receive training on the GSE mechanic profession, relevant math course work, and college-prep. Upon completion, participants are eligible to enroll in the two-year GSE mechanic program at South Seattle College. Both programs are currently in the process of being built out and Ground Service Equipment mechanic positions offer annual salaries ranging from \$62,000 – \$80,000.

**Construction Trades Sector**

In 2023, there were 138 pre-apprenticeship construction training completions, with 71 placements in apprenticeships and trades-related jobs. The hourly wage was \$32.37, a 40% increase from 2022. Among those served since 2021, 77% were retained in their apprenticeship program after one year. In 2023, we experienced a decline in enrollment due to several factors, including several contracts ending and new cohorts of trainees not starting until Q4 of 2023.

**Construction Results**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Enrolled	274	209	157*
Training completions	180	187	138*

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Placements (apprenticeships, trades related jobs)	101	125	71*
Hiring employers	42	63	14
Hourly wage @ placement	\$25.61	\$23.14	\$32.37

\* Numbers include those from construction worker outreach, training, and retention jointly funded by the Port of Seattle, City of Seattle, and Sound Transit.

**Participant demographics:** 76% BIPOC (8% Asian, 39% Black/African American, 20% Hispanic/Latino, 3% Native American/Alaskan Native, 4% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 3% Multi-Race), 22% White, 2% Not reported; 83% men, 15% women; 54% from structurally excluded ZIP codes.

**Types of jobs:** Electricians, bricklayers, ironworkers, painters, laborers, carpenters, sheet metal workers, piledrivers, cement masons, and roofers.

**Maritime Sector**

Created in 2022 and approved for \$4.1 million over three years, the Youth Maritime Career Launch (YMCL) is a pilot program that partners with community organizations and maritime industry employees to create pathways for young people between the ages of 16-24 to gain employment in the maritime industry. In 2023, the program’s inaugural cohorts graduated 25 participants — nearly three-quarters identified as people of color. Ten maritime industry employers were a part of YMCL, providing the participants with work experience in shipyards, recreational boating facilities, and on ferries. The graduates earned credentials in Basic Safety Training, Transportation Workers’ Identification Cards, and Merchant Mariners Credentials, making them competitive and qualified for full-time employment in entry-level maritime roles.

Youth Maritime Career Launch	2023*
Enrollments	40
Training Completions	25
Placements into Internships	21
Hiring Employers	10
Hourly Wage at time of placement	\$19.14

\* Youth Maritime Career Launch began in 2023.

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**Participant demographics:** 73% BIPOC (5% Asian, 53% Black/African American, 10% Hispanic/Latino, 5% Native American/Alaskan Native), 28% White; 72% men, 15% women, 13% Non-Binary; 43% from communities considered structurally excluded (low or very low on the Port’s Equity Index).

**Types of jobs:** Electrical installer, general laborer, welder helper, production intern, electrical intern, shipyard laborer, maritime security, boatshop intern, wiper intern.

### **Maritime High School**

For the 2023 – 2024 school year, 121 students were enrolled, compared to 80 in the previous school year. Among the 2023-2024 student population, 53% identify as white, 47% BIPOC, 33% women, 10% non-binary, and 57% men. For the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade program, the school has shifted from primarily focusing on internships to providing maritime-specific education that will support direct entry to maritime careers and keep a pathway open to a 4-year university experience, like with Seattle Maritime Academy. Planning is underway to develop programming for marine science and maritime construction. Students will still have multiple opportunities to engage with industry and community partners, including internships.

### **Green Jobs**

Most green jobs are not new occupations; they are existing occupations in construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services. Among all Port-related sectors, a 2022 Seattle Jobs Initiative report anticipated that the construction industry would have the highest green job demand for electricians and HVAC occupations. In 2023, Port-funded pre-apprenticeship training programs trained and placed 40 community members into apprenticeships focusing on clean and renewable energy, including the construction, installation, maintenance, and operation of these systems.

Duwamish Green Jobs Program entered its third year of programming in 2023. The adult and youth cohorts consisted of 21 participants from the Duwamish Valley and were taught in English and Spanish. The training included hands-on shoreline restoration work; marsh plant propagation; solar energy jobs presentation; green stormwater infrastructure education; climate change and a just transition; environmental remediation; water quality protection; and more.

In 2023, the Coalition of Climate Careers (C3) mission, vision, and governance model for the coalition a successful collaboration and held the first Green Jobs Green Futures Summit. The event, co-sponsored by the Port of Seattle, King County, and City of Seattle attracted over 400 community members who participated in interactive demonstration stations highlighting career opportunities in the green economy. Looking ahead, C3 aims to collaborate on emerging federal funding options. This will involve building a robust network across labor unions, employers, small businesses, community-based organizations, and importantly, frontline community members who are essential to the workforce needed for a green transition.

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### **Influence on Regional Workforce Development Strategy**

The Port of Seattle’s workforce development efforts also influence regional workforce development policies and leverage investments. In 2023, examples included:

- **Regional Public Owners (RPO’s) Construction** – The Port of Seattle is a partner with the City of Seattle, King County, Sound Transit, WSDOT, and the City of Tacoma in the Regional Public Owners (RPO) group, which works to align public investments and policies to diversify the construction workforce and meet current and future public infrastructure workforce needs. In 2023, the City of Seattle, Sound Transit, and the Port continued to co-invest in construction workforce training and retention strategies and shared lessons learned in worker retention.
- **Coalition for Climate Careers (C3)** – Building on initial collaboration between the Port, King County, and the City of Seattle, C3 formalized in 2023 to become a strategic collaboration among public and private organizations and frontline communities dedicated to establishing an inclusive and prosperous green workforce in King County. C3 prioritizes frontline communities and workers affected by the green economy transition, providing policy guidance, funding for public and private workforce partnerships, promoting green career opportunities, and fostering cross-community collaboration.
- **Regional College System** – The Port’s career pathways program, which funds introductory courses to careers in port-related sectors has an impact on the college system and its offerings. As shared above, the AMT and GSE training programs are examples of introductory courses offered at the airport to create pathways for women and people of color to enroll in two-year AMT and GSE certification programs at South Seattle College.
- **Teach2Connect** – Washington Alliance for Better Schools (WABS) received funding from the Port of Seattle to pilot a redesign of its educator professional development program, ACCESS STEM (now Teach2Connect), in Summer 2023. This program is designed to help educators better connect classroom learning to career pathways in Port-related fields through curriculum development, industry collaboration, and exploration of innovative practices to strengthen student learning. Twelve educators participated who serve close to 1,700 students annually.

### **ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING**

- (1) Presentation Slides

### **PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS**

- (1) June 2023 – The Commission was briefed on the 2022 WFD Annual Report
- (2) February 2022 – The Commission approved a Youth Career Launch Program
- (3) June 2020 – The Commission adopted the Workforce Development Resolution 3776