

The High Road to Hospitality

The Hospitality Training Academy (HTA) is a high road training partnership (H RTP) that develops innovative solutions to address the needs of employers and workers in the hospitality, food service, and leisure/tourism industries. HTA partners with industry leaders who have specialized knowledge, education, training, and workforce development expertise to shape strategies to recruit and upskill workers in the hospitality sector. HTA relies on its deep understanding of the changing nature of hospitality work to provide new and incumbent workers with the skills they need to adapt to those changes.

For over 13 years, HTA has been an expert in the Los Angeles hospitality industry. As a non-profit and the training arm for UNITE HERE Local 11, HTA establishes labor-management partnerships that provide job training for workers in the union and for more than 160 affiliated employers. HTA partners with employers, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and other workforce development agencies to launch initiatives focused on serving low-income, underserved, and underrepresented populations in Los Angeles and Orange Counties and the State of Arizona.

Through the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) H RTP, HTA is launching the High Road to Hospitality Program to expand their training infrastructure to assist low-income job seekers with training, employment readiness,

and placement in union hospitality jobs, and to create pathways for incumbent workers to advance within the industry. As an intermediary, HTA analyzes current trends in the hospitality industry, identifies training needs, proposes workforce solutions, and coordinates with workforce development agencies and sector-based partnerships to meet the needs of hospitality sector employers. For employers, HTA is a direct link to highly skilled and trained hospitality workers.

With support from the CWDB's H RTP initiative, HTA is expanding opportunities to enter the hospitality sector for underserved and underrepresented populations—people of color, immigrants, low-wage workers, the LGBTQ community, and residents with high barriers to employment, including a history of incarceration or homelessness—and improving economic opportunities for incumbent hospitality workers in Los Angeles in three significant ways:

CREATING A WEB-BASED ROLL CALL SYSTEM TO ADDRESS INCOME INSECURITY

To address the underemployment of hospitality service workers, HTA is designing and deploying an online and mobile-app-based roll call system that will place hotel room attendants on an availability list for shifts at other union hotels, thereby providing workers with the opportunity for full employment, stable earnings, and self-sufficiency.

DESIGNING AN ENGLISH SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR NEW HOSPITALITY WORKERS

HTA has designed a curriculum to train immigrant and other minority workers with limited or no English language skills how to communicate effectively in interviews to secure employment with UNITE HERE Local 11 employers in the hospitality and food service industry.

PLACING WORKERS IN FAMILY-SUSTAINING JOBS

Working closely with the City of Los Angeles Workforce Development Board, HTA is functioning as an intermediary between businesses and job candidates referred by the American Job Centers of California, to vet and place candidates in entry-level positions that lead to family-sustaining jobs.

Ultimately, hospitality employers gain a competitive, qualified, and diverse workforce, while job seekers of diverse backgrounds gain access to jobs with family-sustaining wages and benefits, and incumbent workers get career advancement opportunities that lead to higher-paying jobs.

The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) designed the High Road Training Partnership (H RTP) initiative to model a sector approach that can address critical issues of equity, job quality, and environmental sustainability. H RTPs are industry-based, worker-focused training partnerships that build skills for California’s high road employers—firms that compete based on quality of product and service achieved through innovation and investment in human capital and can thus generate family-supporting jobs where workers have agency and voice.

**For more information, see
<https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>**

THE EVOLUTION OF HTA: A BRIEF TIMELINE

UNITE HERE creates Hospitality Training Academy

UNITE HERE establishes the Hospitality Training Academy, a 501(c)(3) financed by the Taft-Hartley Hospitality Industry Training and Education Fund (HITEF), as part of a collective bargaining agreement to provide programs for hotel housekeepers on career development and industry awareness.

HTA partners with Santa Monica

HTA partners with the City of Santa Monica to provide hospitality job training to low-income residents.

HTA and AFL-CIO launch apprenticeship

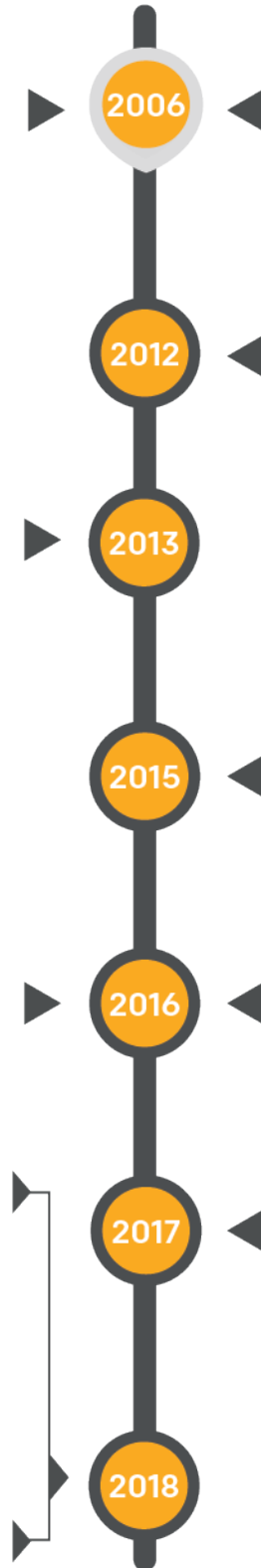
HTA and the AFL-CIO launch a multisector apprenticeship focused on manufacturing and hospitality, approved by the U.S. Department of Labor.

HTA awarded grant to train laid-off workers

HTA receives grants from the City of LA WDB and the CWDB to recruit and train laid-off workers and place them in union hospitality jobs.

HTA receives funding for immigrant ESL training

The LA Care Foundation provides funding to the HTA to tandem-teach English as a Second Language with vocational training to immigrants in LA County.



Task force promotes opportunities for African Americans

The Hospitality Diversity Task Force, a committee of LA industry, community, and labor leaders, promotes employment opportunities in the hospitality and leisure industry for African Americans.

HTA awarded grant to upskill dislocated LAX workers

The City of Los Angeles Community Development Department awards HTA an Innovation Fund grant to upskill workers dislocated by the Los Angeles International Airport modernization.

HTA becomes intermediary for LA County WIB

As an intermediary for the Los Angeles County Workforce Investment Board, HTA analyzes industry needs and convenes with business, labor, education, government, and community-based organizations to strengthen pipeline training programs.

HTA receives grant to train South LA residents

HTA receives a grant from the California Workforce Development Board to train and recruit South LA residents, specifically African American men, transgender individuals, and Asian Americans.

HTA receives CWDB H RTP funding

Through the CWDB's H RTP initiative, HTA receives funding to pilot career path programming for incumbent workers; create career pathways for low-skilled immigrants; and increase recruitment, training, and hiring support for new and expanding hospitality businesses.

Industry Partnerships: Where Demand Meets Supply

The hospitality and leisure industry is vital to the Los Angeles economy. In 2017, an estimated 48 million people visited the Los Angeles region, infusing billions of dollars into the local economy, and another 10 million local residents were served by the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry supports over half a million jobs in Los Angeles. During fiscal year 2017–2018, the average number of leisure and hospitality jobs increased to 534,258, a year-over-year increase of 2 percent, according to the State of California Employment Development Department. The annual report of the city’s Department of Convention and Tourism Development estimates that jobs in hospitality and leisure make up 1 in 9 jobs in Los Angeles County. Almost 1 in 4 youth (ages 16 to 24) worked in hotels, restaurants, museums, and other entertainment venues from 2014 to 2016.

The Los Angeles region is undergoing significant infrastructural improvements that will impact the hospitality industry in the coming years. Projects are currently underway to expand Metro lines, modernize LAX, and build, expand, and renovate entertainment and cultural venues, such as the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Banc of California Stadium, and Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, all of which will help the City of Los Angeles welcome visitors and host residents for the 2022 Super Bowl, 2026 World Cup, and 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. These events will likely spur an increase in jobs in the hospitality, retail, and restaurant sectors.

Through the High Road to Hospitality Program, HTA is advancing its labor-management partnership with UNITE HERE Local 11, high road hospitality employers, local workforce development boards, America’s Job Centers of California (AJCCs), adult schools, community- and faith-based organizations, and agencies and individuals with expertise in providing training and technical assistance, to meet the demands of Los Angeles’s hospitality sector.

Each partner in the labor-management partnership contributes specialized knowledge that collectively shapes workforce development strategies for the

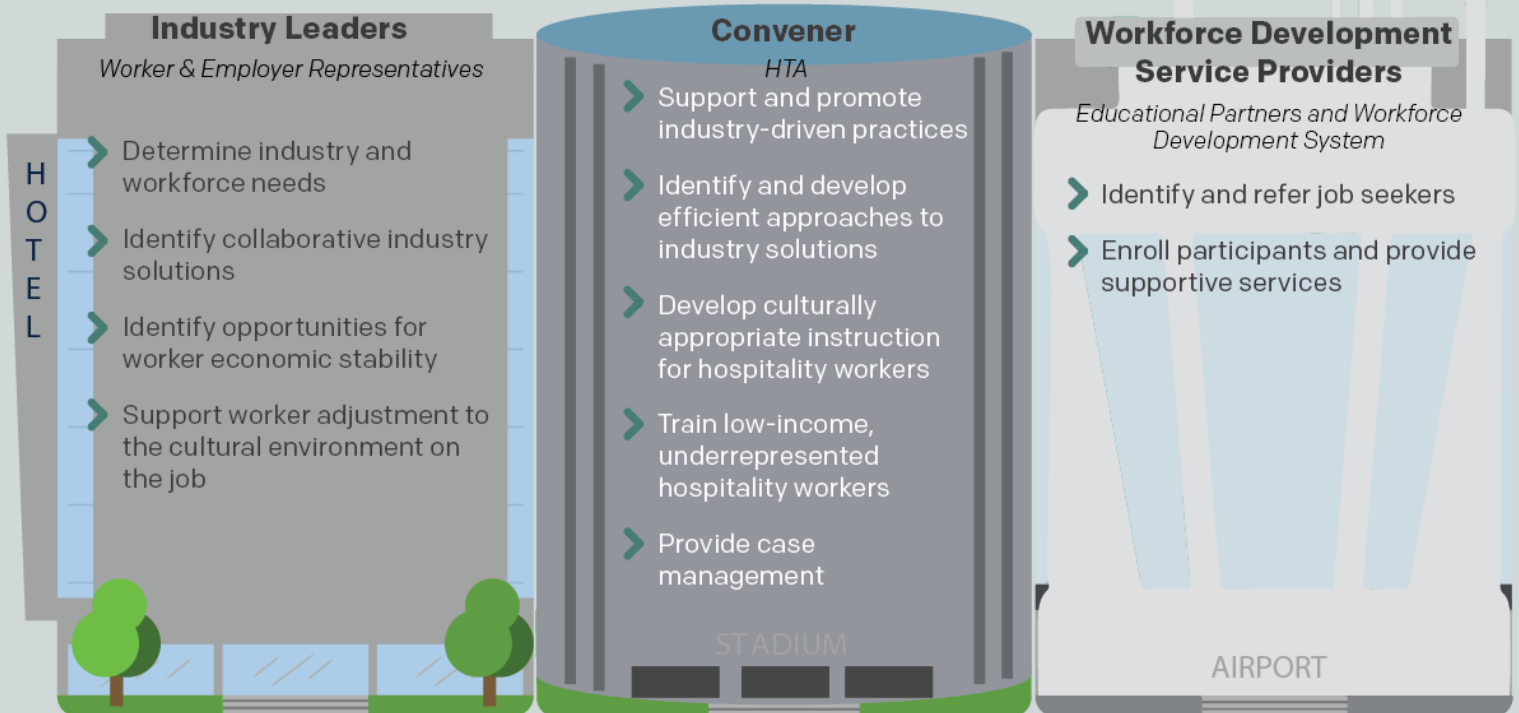
hospitality industry. As industry leaders, employer and union representatives identify their shared needs, challenges, and goals. Intermediaries such as HTA then implement solutions by identifying workforce development mechanisms and strategies that respond to these needs.

HTA has a unique role as both intermediary and training provider. As the workforce development specialist, HTA creates and runs training programs. As the convener, it brokers and nurtures relationships between partner organizations. HTA informs stakeholders in the industry on current trends and training needs and proposes industry-driven, worker-centered solutions. HTA convenes with key partners to develop and implement programming that is culturally relevant and addresses the needs of Local 11's diverse membership. HTA's role as an intermediary makes solutions actionable by identifying workforce development mechanisms on the supply side that secure responses to industry needs identified on the demand side.

- On the demand side, HTA is developing training programs and fostering partnerships to address new and existing employers' needs.
- On the supply side, HTA is creating a talent pipeline by providing greater access to skills development opportunities for new job seekers and incumbent workers in the hospitality sector, specifically immigrants, people of color, and women.

Fig 1. HTA Partner Roles

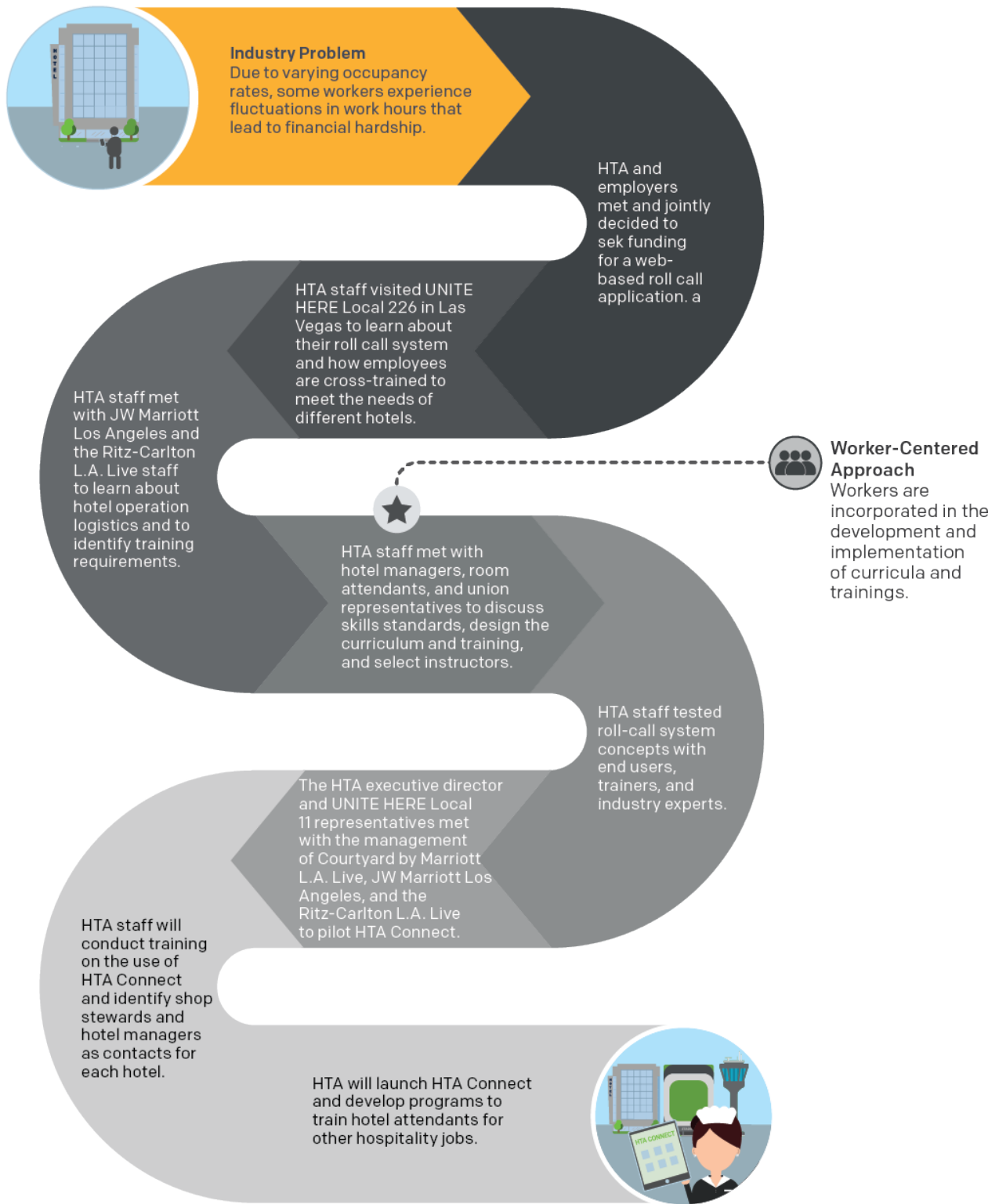
As an intermediary, HTA convenes a labor-management partnership of industry leaders to address the demand side and organizes educational partners, workforce development agencies, and service organizations to address the supply side of the hospitality labor market.



By collaborating with diverse partners, HTA is able to connect workers to jobs with career pathways and family-supporting wages and benefits. Through training and education, HTA is preparing workers who have little to no access to professional development opportunities to enter and succeed in LA's high-growth hospitality industry. In 2018, during National Apprenticeship Week, HTA received a commendation from the City of Los Angeles for its efforts to improve the lives of job seekers through nontraditional apprenticeships.

Fig 2. HTA's High Road Approach in the Hospitality and Leisure Industry

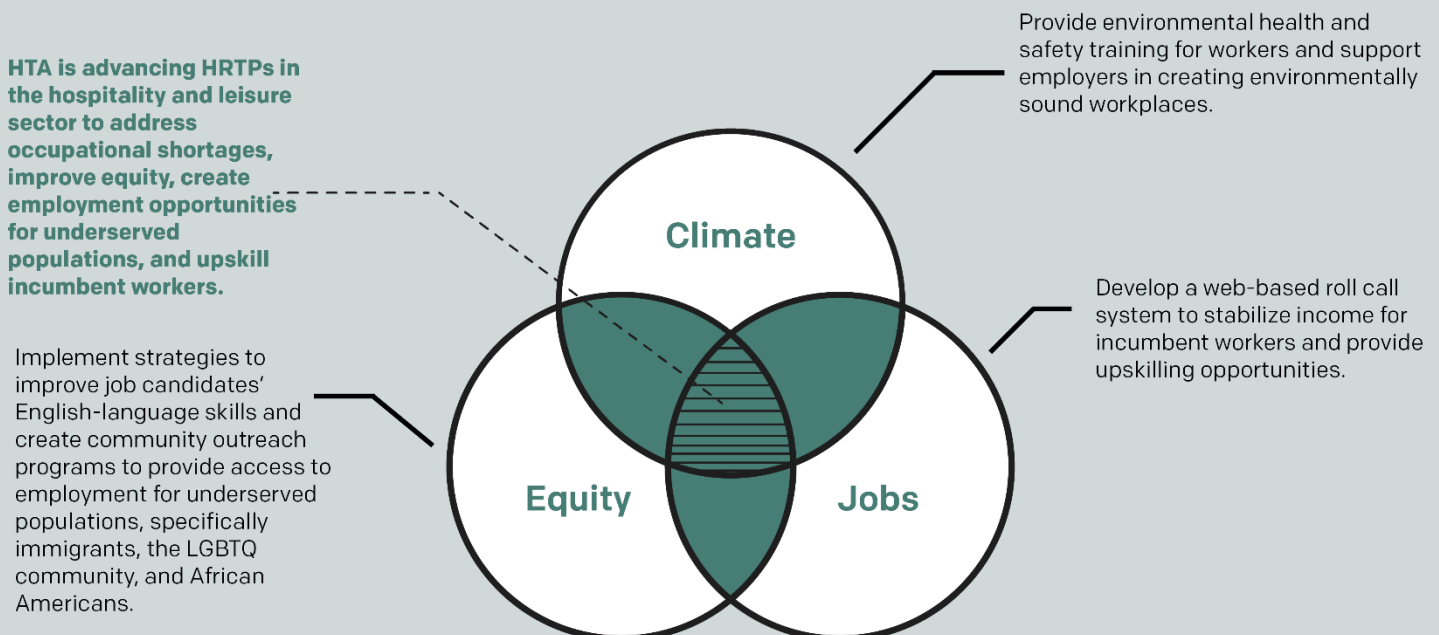
HTA Connect, a roll call system for hotel room attendants, allows workers to be on call for other hotels when hours are unstable.



Taking the High Road: Improving Equity, Job Quality, and Climate Resilience

The High Road to Hospitality Program is focused on populations that are underserved by workforce development initiatives. HTA ensures that underrepresented populations have access to good jobs and improves career prospects for incumbent workers through education and training. HTA is also creating an environmental health and safety training program that will ensure worker health and help businesses meet environmental sustainability goals.

Fig 3. Taking the High Road: Improving Equity, Job Quality, and Climate Resilience



HTA focuses on sector strategies and interventions that value equity, inclusion, and job quality. It facilitates discussions between industry and labor leaders on strategies that integrate the Equity, Climate, and Jobs (ECJ) approach and meet the supply and demand needs of the hospitality and leisure industry.

ADVANCING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The High Road to Hospitality Program is designed to advance equity in the hospitality, food service and leisure/tourism industry. To help hospitality workers with limited English-speaking skills secure higher-paying positions, HTA has developed a 144-hour course, ESL for Hospitality Careers, which focuses on understanding and speaking skills. The course is specifically designed to teach workers the skills to perform well in job interviews and communicate effectively with customers.

Worker and partner input was instrumental in curriculum design and implementation. HTA developed relationships with new partners, including the Los Angeles Unified School District's Division of Adult and Career Education, Evans Community Adult School, navigators (those who connect adult schools with WorkSource Centers) for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and immigrant-serving community-based organizations. The curriculum was developed by two subject-matter experts and incorporated input from employers, human resources directors, union representatives, supervisors, chefs, ESL instructors and other educators, current and incumbent employees, case managers, and members of community-based organizations.

The ESL for Hospitality Careers program utilizes the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) / Integrated Education and Training (IET) model of teaching, which integrates ESL with technical skills instruction, including customer service, server/busser, barista, housekeeping, and knife-cutting training. Students who successfully complete the course receive the National Restaurant Association's ServSafe Food Handler Certification. The training program is helping workers transition into higher-paying positions with good benefits and opportunities for career advancement in hospitality sector union jobs.

Currently, HTA is convening with community-based organizations and stakeholders that work with the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) population - such as API RISE, Chinatown Service Center, Thai Community Development Center, Los Angeles City Council Member David Ryu's office, and a member of the Board of Behavioral Sciences—to explore ways to connect this community with union hospitality jobs.

BUILDING ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

HTA is conducting environmental health and safety training for incumbent workers to support employer partners in creating and maintaining environmentally sound workplaces and ensuring that worker safety and health is a priority. Workers learn how to handle chemicals and substances found in hospitality venues, restaurants, and hotels and to maintain a safe, accident-free workplace. HTA also promotes the ServSafe training for food handlers, a certification program open to all job classifications, through which workers are prepared for different positions within the hospitality industry. For example, anyone from a housekeeper to a barista can become certified in food safety, giving those workers the skills to move into higher-wage occupations.

HTA also actively incorporates worker wisdom into its health and safety curriculum. This knowledge and experience is a valuable resource that ensures programming is culturally relevant and identifies issues that lead to unsafe workplaces.

DELIVERING SKILLS FOR QUALITY JOBS

To create a recruitment pipeline to union hospitality and leisure jobs, HTA hired an intermediary to develop relationships with employers, WorkSource Centers, and community-based organizations. The intermediary established a working group of representatives from America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), Community Career Development, ResCare Workforce Services, Watts Labor Community Action Committee, and Youth Policy Institute to discuss the screening of job candidates and referring them to union employers. HTA continues to engage with employers to provide them with well-qualified applicants and meets with business service representatives from WorkSource Centers to determine procedures for candidate vetting, recruitment, referral, and placements. The intermediary also teaches case managers at WorkSource Centers about hospitality careers and job opportunities available to their participants.

HTA Connect provides workers the opportunity for full-time employment. Although room attendants at union hotels make self-sustaining wages - for example, the Beverly Hilton pays \$18.17 an hour - occupancy rates vary throughout the year, and some workers experience bouts of unemployment or underemployment. Hotels also have high turnover rates because they cannot guarantee full-time work. HTA Connect allows room attendants to apply for jobs at some of the highest-paying union hotels in the area and secure full-time work.

HTA is also providing training incentives with HTA Connect. Workers who want to use the system will be required to participate in three types of training - environmental

health and safety, customer service, and hotel logistics - ensuring that workers are well prepared for employment at other hotels and helping employers maintain safe workplaces.

Expanding the High Road

An H RTP's work is never done. H RTPs provide infrastructure for industry problem-solving, and partnerships evolve along with industry problems and leaders. H RTPs must therefore attend to and strengthen their partnerships' commitment to operating with high road values, to influencing their industries, and to improving their communities. The High Road to Hospitality Program is building partnerships to advance opportunities for underserved populations in Los Angeles to secure high-quality jobs and to demonstrate the value and impact of taking the high road approach in the hospitality industry. To continue to build the high road in the hospitality, HTA will expand and strengthen its H RTP in these ways:

PARTNERSHIP OPERATIONS

HTA will institutionalize and expand HTA Connect and expand employer networks and union participation.

INDUSTRY SYSTEMS CHANGE

HTA will create career pathways for incumbent workers and develop a recruitment pipeline with WorkSource Centers, educational providers, and community community-based organizations. HTA will also create training programs to support safer and healthier workplaces.

SOCIAL IMPACT

HTA will improve workers' ability to contribute to and benefit from the local economy by providing access to good jobs and improving career mobility, especially for workers from disadvantaged backgrounds

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About this Series

Through the HRTP initiative, the CWDB has invested close to \$10 million to develop, refine, and expand a series of skill-focused, industry-based training partnerships that advance equity by linking workforce innovation to regional challenges of job quality, economic mobility, and environmental sustainability. The UCLA Labor Center, commissioned by the CWDB, is leading a two-year evaluation process to understand the successes and challenges of the funded partnerships in building a workforce infrastructure that can holistically address key issues related to equity, climate, and jobs. This is one of a series of eight partnership overviews from UCLA evaluators Ana Luz Gonzalez-Vasquez, Magaly Lopez, and Saba Waheed. For additional overviews and more information about the HRTP initiative, see <https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>.

