

# The High Road to Distribution and Logistics

The West Oakland Job Resource Center (WOJRC) is creating a high road training partnership (HRTP) to build workforce development programs in West Oakland through the City of Oakland's Oakland Army Base (OAB) Redevelopment Project and the Port of Oakland. As a workforce intermediary, the WOJRC provides resources and skills training to job seekers and technical assistance to help OAB and port employers comply with the city's local-hire ordinance, which requires that 50% of new hires come from the local community. The WOJRC provides training programs and wraparound services that include referral services and employment counseling. The WOJRC helps ensure that Oakland residents who have historically experienced high levels of poverty, poor health, lack of employment opportunities, and environmental hazards due to the port's movement of goods can access family-sustaining careers and reach economic self-sufficiency.

Through the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) HRTP initiative, the WOJRC's Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL) Workforce Pipeline program is creating an industry partnership to address local hire and workforce

needs. The WOJRC is partnering with the Northern California Teamsters Apprentice Training and Education Trust Fund (NCTAT), College of Alameda, and OAB and port employers to create the TDL Pre-Apprenticeship Training and Teamsters TDL Apprenticeship Program. Pre-apprenticeships will provide local residents with access to TDL jobs, and apprenticeships will provide upskilling and career pathway opportunities for incumbent workers. The partnership's first projects are to create a business plan for a staffing agency to connect locals to TDL career opportunities and to create a career pathway for warehouse workers to transition into commercial driving to address the need for commercial drivers in the East Bay.

With support from the CWDB's H RTP initiative, the WOJRC is expanding its workforce development efforts through two paths:

## **ESTABLISHING A LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO CREATE TDL INDUSTRY SOLUTIONS**

The WOJRC is a member of an industry-driven, worker-centered labor-management committee to develop and implement training programs designed to meet workforce needs in the TDL sector in Northern California.

## **ADVANCING HIGH ROAD EMPLOYMENT IN THE TDL SECTOR**

The WOJRC is developing pre-apprenticeships that will be linked to Teamsters apprenticeship training programs connecting workers to union jobs. The WOJRC is taking steps to create a High Road Staffing Agency (HRSA) to move job seekers with employment barriers into union jobs in the warehousing industry.

Ultimately, TDL industry employers gain a skilled workforce that meets industry needs and the City of Oakland's equitable hiring requirements, and local residents and incumbent workers gain access to career pathways, resources, and support services.

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**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/>**

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# THE EVOLUTION OF WOJRC: A BRIEF TIMELINE

## The NCTAT career training program is founded

An employer-funded Taft-Hartley Trust, NCTAT provides skills training to Teamsters and creates career opportunities in construction and other industries.

1989

## OAB redevelopment to serve the community

Community-based advocates unite to ensure that OAB redevelopment serves the local community, a historically depressed area with double-digit unemployment and health issues caused by the port's environmental impact.

2010

## Developers propose a global logistics center

The Seaport Logistics Complex on former OAB land would support the movement of goods from the Port of Oakland.

## The WOJRC is founded

The WOJRC is born out of an agreement requiring core funding for a community resource center to connect locals to new jobs and provide technical assistance to OAB employers.

2012

## City of Oakland adopts Good Jobs Policy

The landmark Good Jobs Policy includes three complementary agreements: a land-lease disposition, a project labor agreement, and a cooperation agreement that collectively ensure local hire, the prohibition of job application questions regarding criminal records, and employment of skilled building-trades workers.

## The WOJRC and Teamsters identify career paths

The WOJRC and Teamsters representatives meet to identify possible career paths through the HRTP initiative.

2017

## Port of Oakland enacts Good Jobs Policy for Seaport Logistics Complex

The strengthened Good Jobs Policy identifies the resource center as a first-source hire and employer of record, allowing WOJRC to operate a socially responsible alternative staffing model.

# Industry Partnerships: Where Demand Meets Supply

The WOJRC's TDL Workforce Pipeline program focuses on in-demand occupations: bus drivers, truck operators, reuse and recyclable material collectors, recycling workers, labor freight material movers, and heavy trailer truck drivers. Together, these occupations account for almost 600,000 workers in California, and that number is projected to grow. According to the state's Employment Development Department, average annual job openings in these occupations range from 2,260 to 52,090, with median hourly wages from \$14.50 to \$25.73.

West Oakland is home to the Port of Oakland, the eighth busiest container port in the country. Adjacent to the port is a \$1.2 billion OAB redevelopment project that will create the largest cargo distribution facility on the West Coast, with over 2 million square feet of warehousing space. Tenants will include companies transferring cargo between trucks, trains, and vessels and preparing it for shipment and distribution. The redevelopment project is expected to create much-needed job opportunities for a community of predominantly black residents who for decades have experienced high levels of poverty and unemployment, along with other socioeconomic disadvantages. To make sure new jobs support the community, the City of Oakland and the port adopted several policies, including a 50% local-hire ordinance.

To prepare for its role, the WOJRC worked with Teamsters staff to create a labor-management partnership including Joint Council 7's political director, a Teamsters Local 853 business agent, and union business representatives working with employers committed to the apprenticeship program. The industry leaders met to develop a quality assurance plan and to form an advisory committee, the Northern California Teamsters Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC). Employers will be added to the partnership as OAB and port developers identify companies to lease the warehousing units. Employers and labor will have equal representation in the JATC.

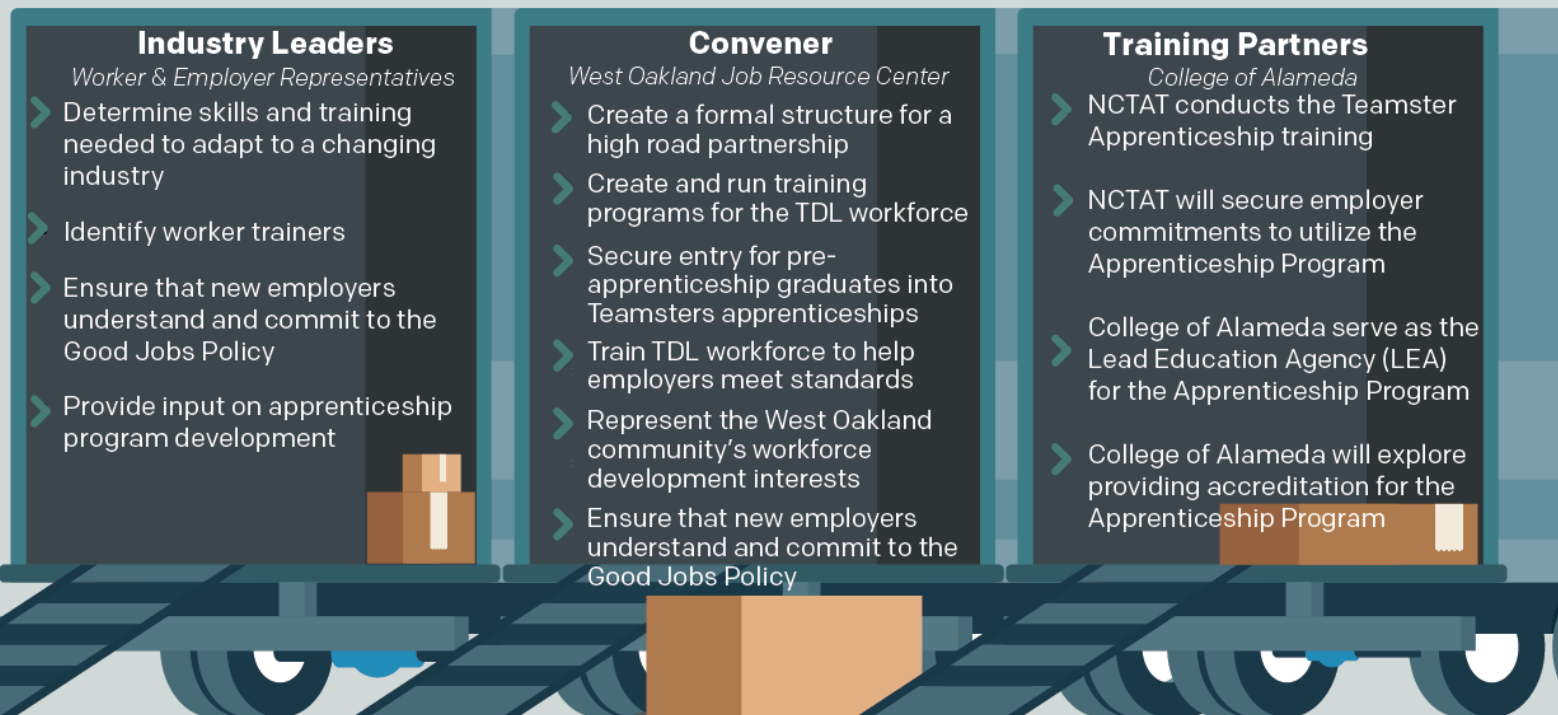
The JATC is charged with supervising the administration and enforcement of the Northern California Teamsters' apprenticeship standards, adopting rules and regulations to govern programs, developing and complying with industry training criteria, and ensuring that the interests of apprentices are represented in program development. The JATC will identify industry needs, create training programs and career pathways to ensure a high road approach to meet those needs, and create access and skill advancement opportunities for West Oakland and other Northern California residents.

Subcommittees were formed to lead discussions on industry assessments, business plans, community college partnerships, and marketing. One subcommittee, for example, was tasked with working with technical consultants to conduct a feasibility study for operating a High Road Staffing Agency (HRSA), which included an assessment of OAB employer interest, hiring needs, potential financial support, and pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program operating costs. The plan will be used to pitch the project to potential employer partners.

Each partner in the JATC contributes specialized knowledge. Industry leaders identify shared needs, challenges, and goals, and in response, intermediaries identify workforce development mechanisms.

Fig 1. The WOJRC H RTP Partner Roles

The WOJRC is convening TDL industry leaders from labor and management to identify skill needs and develop solutions for the industry. The WOJRC is connecting to partners that can contribute supply-side solutions like training programs.

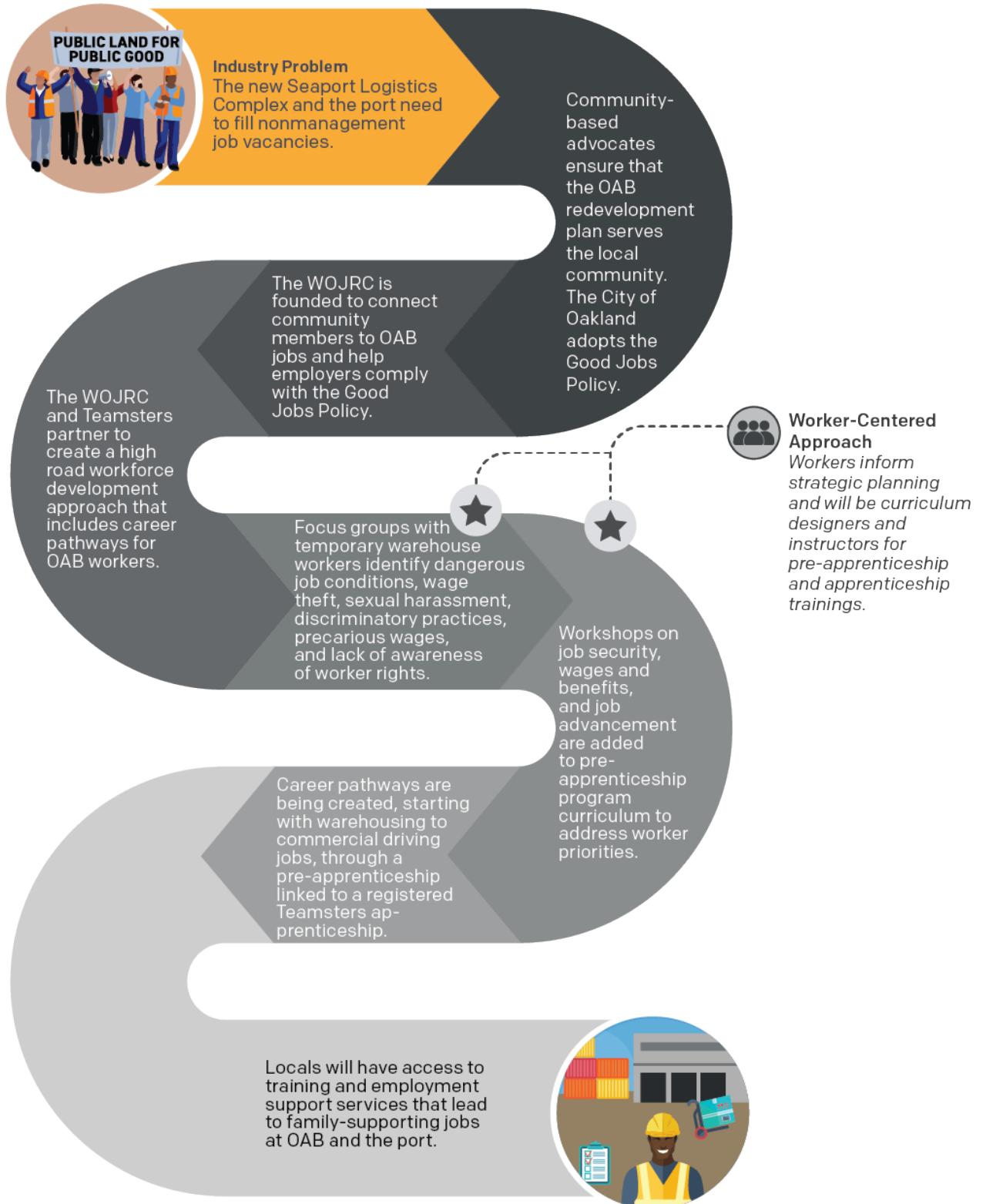


- On the demand side, the WOJRC H RTP will identify skills and training to address TDL industry needs while simultaneously helping OAB and port employers meet Good Jobs Policy obligations.
- On the supply side, the WOJRC H RTP will develop worker-centered training programs that lead to jobs with responsible employers and improve economic outcomes for Oakland locals.

H RTP conveners typically collaborate with existing workforce development providers, such as workforce boards, community colleges, adult schools, community-based organizations, and social service agencies. In partnership with workforce investment boards and community-based organizations, the WOJRC is working with the College of Alameda to provide introductory warehouse and forklift training. The WOJRC TDL Pre-Apprenticeship training prepares students for warehouse and commercial driving employment. The training incorporates skills advancement training, such as customer service, anger management, communication, and Class A permit test preparation, in order to advance from warehouse to commercial truck driving positions.

Fig 2. The WOJRC's High Road Approach in the TDL Industry

The WOJRC HRTP is creating a wraparound service system to address barriers to employment for West Oakland locals and ensure that they can earn a living wage and are protected from discrimination.

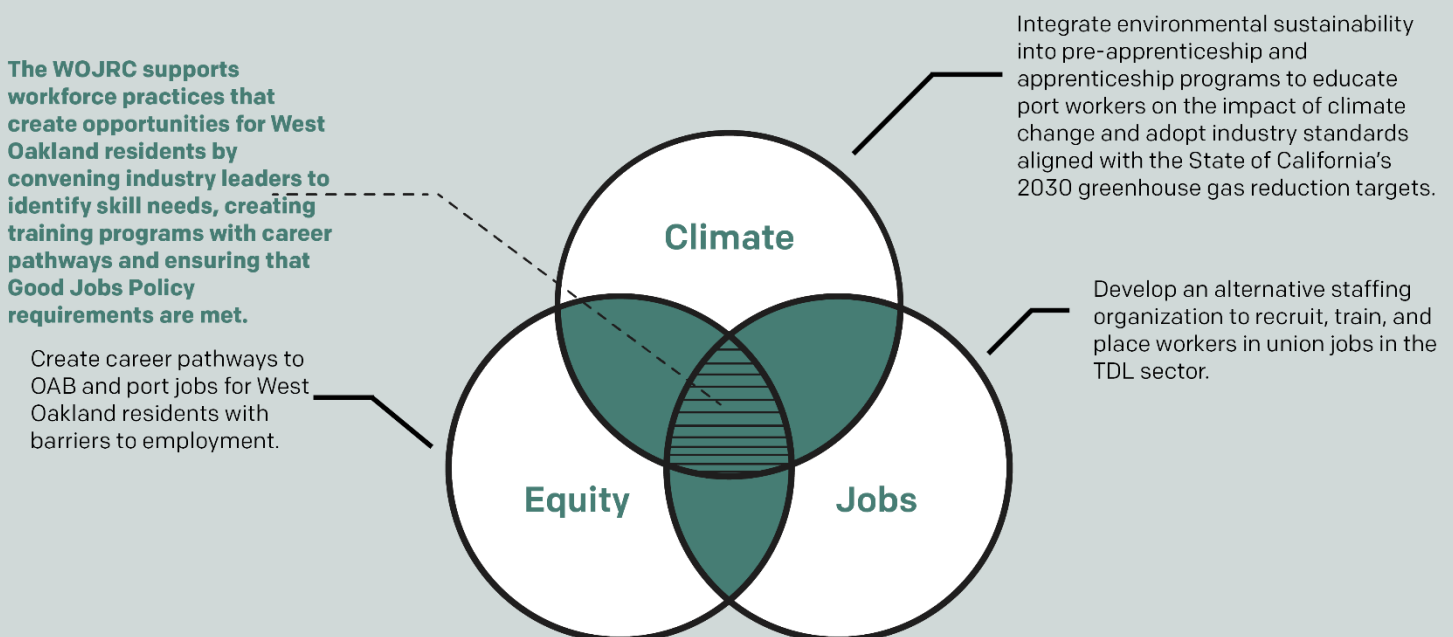




# Taking the High Road: Improving Equity, Job Quality, and Climate Resilience

The WOJRC's H RTP project prioritizes equity, job quality, and environmental sustainability. The WOJRC facilitates discussions - between NCTAT, Teamsters West Oakland's Joint Council 7 political directors (representing 22 locals in Northern and Central California), Teamsters business agents and representatives, and land developers identifying new employers to lease warehouses - on implementation strategies that integrate the Equity, Climate, and Jobs (ECJ) approach and meet industry supply and demand needs. New OAB warehouse employers and workers will be incorporated into JATC discussions.

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



## **ADVANCING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

The economic inequality gap in Oakland is significant, growing, and mostly affecting workers of color in low-wage jobs. In 2015 for instance, the median hourly wage for a worker of color was \$13 less than that of a white worker. Since the mid-20th century, West Oakland has been home to a primarily black community with high levels of poverty, poor health, violence, and unemployment. The area has also suffered environmental impacts from the port's goods-movement industry. As the OAB becomes a warehouse center, the WOJRC is tasked with securing new warehousing jobs for locals through services and training that address employment barriers.

The WOJRC is developing a socially responsible staffing agency to connect Oakland residents to jobs on the OAB and the port and to help employers meet local hiring goals. Because 30 % of TDL jobs are temporary, the HRSA plans to operate in alignment with WOJRC HRTTP training programs and employment support services to link temporary workers to jobs with union representation, livable wages and benefits, and more job security. The HRSA will also serve as the first source to fill non-management job vacancies for all OAB employers. Employers will be part of the JATC labor-management partnership and will inform the HRSA about their workforce needs.

A feasibility study shaped the HRSA business model, projected startup costs, and identified three primary TDL industry clusters: facility and mobile equipment maintenance, transportation operations, and warehousing and distribution center operations. The WOJRC is exploring operating structures, securing liability insurance, and solidifying partnerships for back-office support and securing pro-bono legal services, and the WOJRC is in conversations with two TDL companies about using the staffing agency.

## **BUILDING ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE**

The WOJRC and JATC will ensure that OAB and port workers are trained to support air-quality improvement and climate protection efforts to meet the standards adopted by government and communities impacted by local freight. The WOJRC HRTTP pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs in TDL commercial driving exemplify that commitment. By training warehouse workers to obtain commercial driving licenses, operate clean-technology trucks, and drive conventional trucks as efficiently as possible, the program not only addresses the shortage of credentialed employees in the East Bay and creates pathways to careers with high wages, benefits, and advancement opportunities, but also empowers

frontline workers to help the industry meet California’s air-quality and climate-policy objectives for the freight sector.

To support the freight industry in complying with clean air and climate protection mandates and meeting community health and environmental goals, the WOJRC will continue to work closely with the Port of Oakland to ensure that the apprenticeship curriculum is informed by the Maritime Air Quality Improvement Plan (MAIP) and the Truck Management Plan, both of which include California Air Resource Board regulations to reduce greenhouse gases and diesel particulate matter from freight transportation. Finally, the WOJRC will work with the port, residents, community groups, and local environmental agencies addressing trucking concerns in West Oakland.

## **DELIVERING SKILLS FOR QUALITY JOBS**

The WOJRC’s goal is to establish a wraparound employment service system through pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. The WOJRC H RTP will help underrepresented workers secure union jobs with consistent work hours and shorter transitions from temporary to permanent positions and provide ongoing training, certification and licensing opportunities, and support services. Through classroom and on-the-job training, warehouse workers will learn about safe driving techniques, load securement, forklift operations, hazardous material transportation, hazardous waste recognition, ergonomic safety, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rights and responsibilities. Employers will gain a skilled workforce that will increase productivity and reduce turnover rates.

In response to focus groups with warehouse temporary workers, which identified dangerous job conditions, wage theft, sexual harassment, discriminatory practices, precarious wages, and a lack of awareness of worker rights, workshops on worker rights, job security, wages and benefits, and job advancement may be added to either the TDL Pre-Apprenticeship Training or Teamsters Apprenticeship Training Program.

The JATC is creating an onboarding process to protect the rights and interests of the apprentices. Prior to enrollment, the WOJRC will assess participant readiness through drug testing,

reading comprehension, physical exams, and proper documentation for employment, like clean driving records and California residency. Job seekers that do not meet the requirements will be offered support such as case management and remediation courses. The three-week pre-apprenticeship curriculum will include job readiness training, taught by WOJRC; OSHA training and test preparation for commercial driver's license permit, taught by NCTAT; and warehouse and forklift training, taught by the College of Alameda. Those who successfully complete WOJRC's TDL Pre-Apprenticeship Program will be provided with 30 points; the Teamsters' Apprenticeship program acceptance policy is based on a point system.

The WOJRC is currently working with Teamsters Local 70, NCTAT, the California Labor Federation, and the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards to register a Teamsters Apprenticeship Training.

# 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 WOJRC project is building partnerships and systems to move Oakland residents with systemic barriers to employment into family-supporting jobs in the TDL industry. To continue to build the high road in the TDL sectors, WOJRC will expand and strengthen its H RTP in these ways:

## **PARTNERSHIP OPERATIONS**

The WOJRC will strengthen its partnership structure, incorporate workers' and employers' voices in its core leadership, create pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and institutionalize its HRSA.

## **INDUSTRY SYSTEMS CHANGE**

The WOJRC will connect Oakland residents to training opportunities, create pathways to high-quality jobs, provide a steady flow of skilled employees to OAB and port companies, create healthier and safer workplaces, and build a network of employers across Northern California.

## **SOCIAL IMPACT**

The WOJRC will provide local residents with access to quality jobs and create a cleaner environment in the port community.

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# About this Series

Through the H RTP 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 H RTP initiative, see <https://cwdb.ca.gov/initiatives/high-road-training-partnerships/>.