

An Initiative of the California Workforce Development Board

For Los Angeles' Black community, unionized public sector employment has long been an avenue to join the middle class. The Black population has a poverty rate of over 20 percent and, according to Advancement Project LA/Race Counts, experiences the highest rates of unemployment, underemployment, homelessness, and incarceration, and has the second lowest life expectancy compared to other ethnic groups in Los Angeles County. Despite the stark disparities faced by Black Angelenos, two factors continue to contribute to the economic and social stability of the Black middle class in Los Angeles: public sector jobs and the unions that represent public sector employees.

The public sector has provided Black workers at a variety of education levels with secure, quality jobs so that they may earn a good living and live a good life—especially when compared to their private sector counterparts. The Worker Education and Resource Center's project will improve access to public sector jobs for Black and underrepresented workers by creating a pathway into Department of Public Works jobs, specifically jobs upgrading the City's infrastructure to meet the present and future need for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. WERC will strengthen the City's internal workforce development efforts to establish a program for Black workers and workers with barriers to employment within the City of LA.

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### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Create and implement a pre-employment, employment, and career advancement program that trains, skills-up, retains, and promotes workers in DPW and provides a skilled, green workforce for the City of Los Angeles.
- Develop a mentorship training program that prepares rank-and-file union members at DPW to become mentors to new DPW employees and incumbent workers in entry-level positions who have barriers to advancement, as a retention and promotion strategy.
- Ongoing case management for each trainee that supports their success in the classroom and during their probation on the job. Case managers will connect trainees to the services and resources needed for full engagement and participation in the training program.
- DPW will work to ultimately hire job-seekers from the Demonstration Project into City jobs, and aim to promote incumbents with barriers to advancement.

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### KEY PARTNERS

- City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (DPW)
- City of Los Angeles Workforce Development Board
- Los Angeles Black Worker Center
- SEIU Local 72
- AFSCME District Council 36
- 1000 Strong Coalition
- County Federation of Labor (LA Fed)
- UCLA Labor Center
- UCLA Labor and Occupational Safety and Health Program

