

The Wilmington Housing Authority Creates Career Opportunities for Young Adults in Delaware through the YouthBuild Grant

Wilmington Housing Authority has partnered with several Delaware businesses, organizations, and educational institutions to provide youth with careers in green energy.

Wilmington, DE: The U.S. Department of Labor awarded the Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA) with a \$1.5 million YouthBuild Grant. The goal of the grant is to grow the green clean energy workforce by providing education, training, and career opportunities to young adults.

YouthBuild is a community-based pre-apprenticeship program that provides job training and education opportunities for at-risk youth between the ages of 16 to 24 who previously dropped out of high school. Participants in the program engage in classroom learning and a construction apprenticeship to prepare them with the necessary skills to excel in the workforce upon completion of the program.

Because of this grant, over 80 Wilmington youth will have the opportunity to build their careers in the green energy construction space. Participants will be grouped in one of four 24-month cohorts. Under professional guidance and mentorship, they will receive hands-on construction training while renovating 2 Wilmington area single-family residences.

By the end of the program, participants will also have earned their GED high school equivalency, obtained their NCCER Construction Technology Certificate, and completed the foundational hands-on training to complete their Comp TIA certificate. As a result, participants will have the tools and skills to advance their careers in green energy space.

Additional case management and supports, such as childcare, transportation, healthcare, financial aid, and SNAP benefits will be provided to support participants in completing the program.

WHA Executive Director, Ray Fitzgerald stated, "It is my understanding that this is the first time that a Delaware organization has been awarded this grant. Receiving this grant provides a great opportunity for us to provide services and supports to young people who reside in Wilmington Housing Authority units and for voucher holders. I want to congratulate my team at WHA who coordinated with our partners and worked tirelessly to make this possible. Special thanks goes to Irmira Williams and Ronnette Anderson, who led this initiative on behalf of WHA."

"On behalf of our team, I thank our Federal Delegation, U.S. Senators Carper and Coons and U.S. Representative Blunt-Rochester for their support. In addition, I thank our partners, the Delaware Affordable Housing Group (DAHG), REACH Riversidse, DiSabatino Construction, Harkins Builders, Delaware Technical College, the Delaware Department of Labor, NERDiT Now, Celebrate US Workforce Training, Peace By Piece, CareerTeam, Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County, Trinity Health Mid-Atlantic, and Code Differently for their support and partnership."

Planning for the grant will begin in May 2022.

About The Wilmington Housing Authority: As the largest direct provider of affordable housing opportunities in the State of Delaware, we're committed to developing, providing, and managing safe, and affordable housing for low-income families in the city of Wilmington. Funded primarily by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, our mission is to provide well-maintained, decent, and

safe housing in a professional, efficient, and fiscally responsible manner. The Wilmington Housing Authority administers over 2,000 housing choice vouchers, manages nearly 2,000 units of public, tax credit, and market rate housing, and serves over 7,000 low moderate-income residents of the city of Wilmington.