



UNTAPPED RESOURCES, UNTAPPED LABOR POOL

USING FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDS
TO PREPARE WOMEN FOR
CAREERS IN CONSTRUCTION

Ariane Hegewisch
Institute for Women's Policy Research
Hegewisch@iwpr.org

Leveraging Highway Funds to Support Women in Construction

WHY FOCUS ON WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION: JOB GROWTH, DECENT PAY, EARN & LEARN

■ Above average job growth

- Economic recovery and replacement of retiring workers.

■ Higher median hourly earnings than many other fast growing occupations

Personal care aides: \$ 9.57

Nursing care assistants: \$11.73

Preschool teacher: \$13.04

Laborers & helpers: \$13.32

Painters: \$16.92

Equipment/ operators: \$19.70

■ Apprenticeships

- Earn while you learn

**“LET WOMEN KNOW THAT THERE ARE WOMEN OUT THERE IN
NONTRADITIONAL JOBS. I DID NOT KNOW.”**

2013 IWPR TRADESWOMEN SURVEY RESPONDENT

Women in Construction Trades

Absolutely many

- In 2006, before the Great Recession, there were more women construction workers than women doctors.
- In 2014, 198,000 women worked in Construction and Extraction Occupations, **more than** women working as
 - Dental hygienists (170,000 women)
 - Pharmacists (165,000 women)
 - Veterinarians (45,500 women)

But Relatively few...

- In 2014, women were only 2.6 percent of workers in construction occupations, and fewer than 3 percent of construction apprentices.

Source: Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey. Table 11. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity; 2014 Annual Averages; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

HOW TO BREAK THE PATTERNS OF LAST 30 YEARS AND CREATE EQUAL ACCESS FOR WOMEN TO CONSTRUCTION JOBS

Career counselling

- Only 2% of tradeswomen learned about trades in High School or One Stops

Preparation

- Pre-apprenticeship training
- Gender lens in teaching

Apprenticeship & work

- Harassment/discrimination
- Retention

\$\$ Funding \$\$?

FUNDING TO SUPPORT WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

\$?

WIOA and Perkins Act
identify support for women to enter nontraditional occupations as legitimate sources for program expenditure

<\$1
mil

WANTO (Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act): TA and pre-apprenticeships

\$10
mil

**Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)
On-the-Job Training Support Services Program**

23 USC Section 140(b)

\$\$\$\$

**Highway Trust Fund
Core Program 23
USC Section 504(e):**
potentially \$6.7 billion
(0.5% of total funds)
for improving
workforce diversity

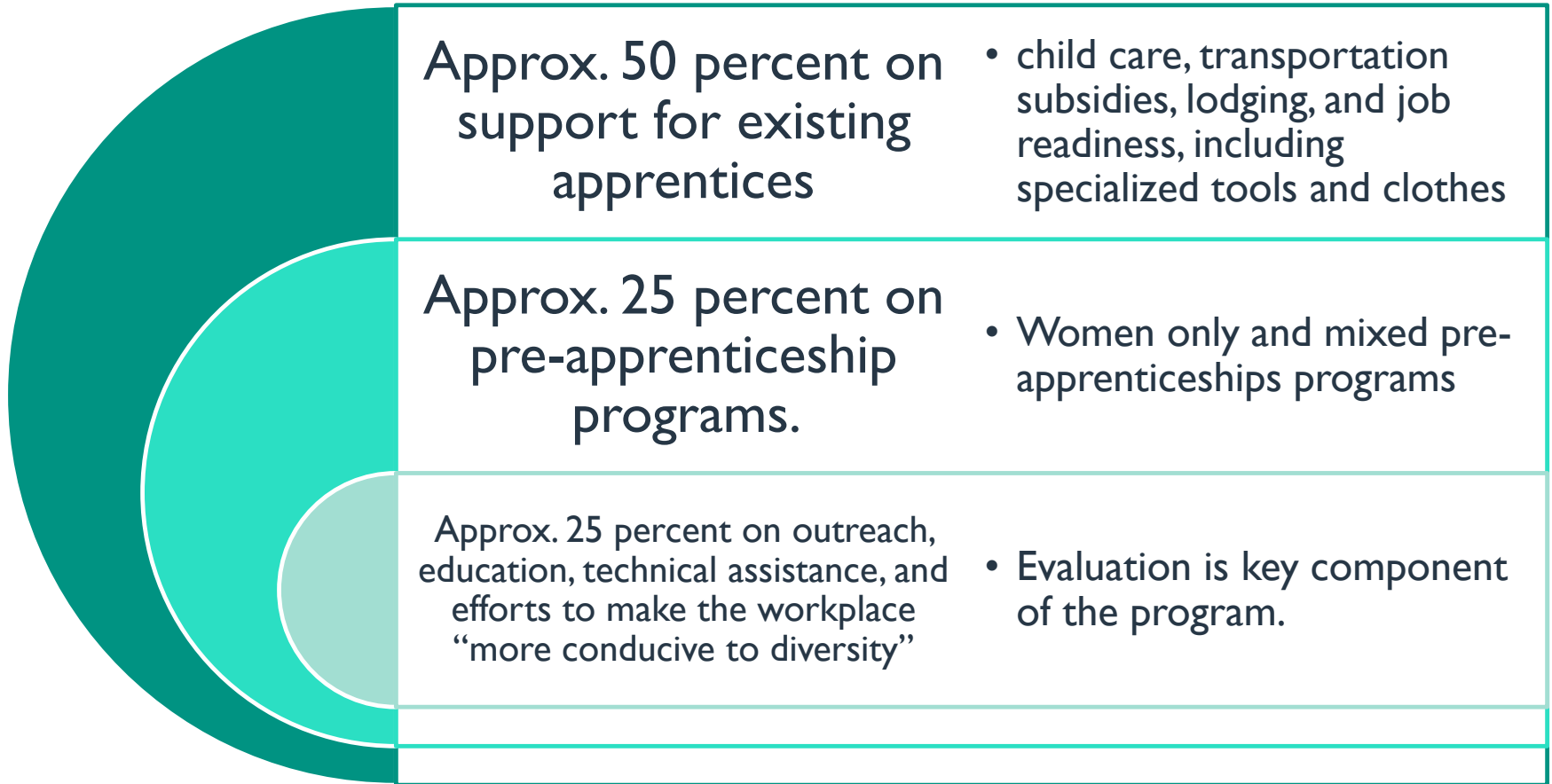
HIGH WAY TRUST FUND \$\$ FOR DIVERSITY

Oregon 2011 § 184.866 Highway construction workforce development: \$2.3 million for 2 years.

Creating a permanent funding stream through the statutory route (instead of Governor's choice) – with clear accountability

Maryland 2012 Ch. 664 Transportation or Capital Transit Construction Training and Support Services: \$2.1 million for 2 years.

OREGON'S ODOT/BOLI PROGRAM 2013 BUDGET WAS SPENT ON:



CONCLUSION & THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

- Apprenticeships offer a clear pathway to skilled careers in construction.
- Federal Highway Funds can offer a substantial source of funding to diversity the construction workforce.
- The joint initiative by Oregon Department of Transportation & Bureau of Labor and Industry offers a comprehensive approach for using such funds (retention of existing apprentices; preparation; outreach, evaluation).

More information at: <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/untapped-resources-untapped-labor-pool?searchterm=Untapped>