THE CONSORTIUM FOR WORKER EDUCATION

FY 2013-2014
QUALITATIVE EVALUATION REPORT

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Local 28 members and others from the Workers Art Coalition created a float for the massive climate change march in New York City. According to the NY Times article describing the work, the float is made of sheet metal and features mini-models of the Empire State Building, Chrysler Building, Freedom Tower and the Brooklyn Bridge, along with a sign that states “We Build the Future.” The float is pulled by a biodiesel truck, and its lights are powered by workers riding bicycles. According to a participating member of Local 28, it was meant to send the message that “organized labor is already using green technology.” (New York Times, 9/20/14: page C2).
Executive Summary
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This Executive Summary provides a condensed version of the data and findings of the third annual qualitative evaluation of selected CWE funded worker education programs.

These annual evaluations supplement the quantitative data on participation in worker education programs that CWE provides annually to the New York State Education Department. The evaluation is based on class observations, review of program documents, interviews with administrators and instructors, and focus groups with participants in each program. The data collected on each program is used as evidence to document how and whether the programs in this year’s evaluation meet the qualitative outcomes common to each program type represented as well as those common to all CWE funded programs. These outcomes emerged from initial focus groups with representatives of each program type, conducted in summer 2011 in preparation for the first qualitative evaluations in FY2011-2012 (see APPENDIX, page 6). In addition, the programs must comply with the funding mandate of CWE’s employment preparation education: “Such programs conducted by the consortium for worker education. . . .with the goals of enabling adults who are twenty-one years of age or older to retain employment or improve their work skills capacity to enhance their opportunities for increased earnings and advancement.” (Section 2 of Chapter 756).

The three programs evaluated this year are:

Building Trade: Local 28 of SMART: Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers;

Union Training Fund: District Council 1707 of AFSCME (American Federation of Federal, State and Municipal Employees), a public sector union of Day Care, Head Start, and Home Care Workers, and workers in not-for-profit social service agencies;

Community Based Organization: Henry Street Settlement House.
Local 28 of SMART: Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers

Purpose: The Nicholas Maldarelli Training Center of Local 28 provides pre-apprenticeship training of 6-9 months, 4.5 years of apprenticeship training, and all safety and health training required to work on construction sites in New York City. During their apprenticeship, Local 28 members are placed on job sites with employers and return to the classroom periodically to ensure an optimum mix of on-the-job, hands-on and classroom learning. After and during their apprenticeship training, members also take classes for required safety or specialty trainings and certifications both during and after their apprenticeship. Sheet metal is the only trade that begins with a 100% American raw product; Local 28 members shape this material into the ductwork for the HVAC systems of the City’s buildings, working with other trades to ensure that these air systems are aligned with the building’s electrical, architectural, structural and mechanical plans.

Population: Sixty-three percent of current Local 28 members are people of color; 8% are women, and 2% are veterans. Twenty-seven percent are white males who are not veterans.

CWE Funding Use: CWE funding helps support safety, upgrading and specialty skills training (such as welding, testing and balancing, computer assisted design) for Local 28 members, as well as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training. The New York City construction environment requires an increasing number of safety and training credentials just to work on job sites, and additional skills training increases employment opportunities for Local 28 members.

Achievements: In FY 2013-14, 94% of 415 Local 28 members completed a total of 52 career and technical classes, advancing in their apprenticeships and receiving necessary safety and skill certifications. Sheet metal workers enjoy a comfortable wage and benefit package: Pre-apprentices start at $15.02 an hour, valued at $21.26 with the accompanying benefit package. Over the 4.5 years of apprenticeship, wages move from 35% to 75% of the mechanic’s wage ($50.91 an hour, or $94.11 including the total benefit package). Upon completion of all 4.5 years of apprenticeship and reaching journey level, Local 28 members earn the full mechanic’s wage at minimum, but often make more if they are highly skilled.

Evaluation: Local 28 training fulfills all of the outcomes common to the building trades, as well as all of those common to all CWE programs. The apprenticeship training it provides fully supports entry into the sheet metal trade, while ongoing safety, licensing and certification classes maximize employment opportunities. The Nicholas Maldarelli Training Center, with the help of CWE, ensures that Local 28 members continue to advance in the trade throughout their working lives. Pre-apprentices and apprentices stressed the life-changing impact becoming a sheet metal worker has on their lives and their families, and by extension, their communities: “We make the city grow, and we pretty much build the city. You don’t want to leave 100,000 people behind when you can invest in them and make the city a better place for more people to come see. [So funding for this program] is for a good cause. It gives equal opportunity for everybody out there to succeed for their families and to give back to the city and the state in the long run.” Year 4 Apprentice.
District Council 1707 members belong to six separate locals, but are united by the essential services they provide to the most vulnerable and needy New Yorkers:

**Local 389:** DC 1707’s largest and fastest growing local, includes 7000 home care providers.

**Local 95:** More than 2000 Head Start workers in this local provide early childhood education in over 200 programs in the five boroughs and Long Island.

**Local 205:** The 6000 members of this local work in 350 child care centers in New York City, providing critical pre-school education to young children.

**Locals 107 (National Membership and Fundraising Organization workers), 215 (Social Service Employees in mental health, foster care and other social service organizations) and 253 (Education Employees).**

**Population:** In CWE funded DC1707 classes in FY2013-14, 78% of participants were Black or Latino, 5% were Asian, and 17% were white. Eighty-eight percent were women.

**CWE Funding Use:** Education funded by CWE for 1707 members supports computer classes for members of all of the participating locals, as well as classes that provide the skills and credentials required for maintaining or advancing employment in Home Care, Day Care, and Head Start.

**Training:** CWE funds upgrade training for home care workers, who must now be certified as Home Health Aides in order to work in New York State. Day Care and Head Start workers must attain their Child Development Associates (CDA); Assistant Teachers must pass the Assessment of teaching Assistant Skills (ATAS), and Day Care Teachers must pass three statewide tests as well as work toward their Masters. CWE support funds test prep classes for these required exams as well as CDA completion classes and mandatory monthly staff development workshops for day care and Head Start workers. Computer classes are open to all members as well as to unemployed New Yorkers.

**Achievements:** 99% of 5043 enrollees completed classes provided by DC 1707 in FY2013-14. The vast majority of these (4805) were child care and Head Start enrollees attending monthly required staff development. In addition, 45 of 53 child care workers who attended related test preparation classes achieved certification as Child Development Associates. Another 12 members, out of an initial 22 enrollees, were certified after attending related test prep and passing the Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills (ATAS). Among home care workers training to become Home Health Aides, 79 of 82 enrollees (96%) achieved certification, as measured by written tests and clinical demonstrations. Ninety-one percent of workers enrolled in computer classes completed these, while 32% of day care and Head Start members enrolled in the Content Specialty Test prep course and 60% of those enrolled in Liberal Arts and Sciences test prep completed these courses.

**Evaluation:** Based on the 2013-14 qualitative evaluation, DC1707’s education and training program achieved all of the outcomes common to all types of CWE programs as well as those specific to union-based training programs. In the words of G.L. Tyler, Political Action Director at DC1707: **“CWE funded classes at 1707 represent the ladder of success for workers who have been marginalized.”**
Henry Street Settlement House

**Purpose:** Henry Street Settlement (HSS) “opens doors of opportunity to enrich lives and enhance human progress for Lower East Side residents and other New Yorkers.” While CWE funding is used for education related to employment programs at HSS, its impact on participants is greatly enhanced by Henry Street’s additional social services and programs in mental and physical health, the arts, and supportive housing.

**Population:** For more than a century, Henry Street has served the Lower East Side community, where over half (56%) of residents speak a language other than English and 25-50% live below the poverty line. Today, HSS extends its reach to all New Yorkers. In FY 2013-14, only 5% of HSS participants in CWE classes identified themselves as White.

**CWE Funding Use:** Funding supports education linked to jobs, with classes in job readiness, high school completion and Workforce ESL, where English is taught to immigrant workers in a job search context. This year, funding was used for the first ever New York City Bicycle Mechanics Skills Academy. Job placement for program participants is enhanced by Henry Street’s participation in the Lower East Side Employment Network (LESEN), which links key local employers to a diverse pool of job seekers.

**Training:** Job readiness training at Henry Street is an intensive two week immersion in all aspects of job search. Participants work collaboratively on resumes and cover letters, and on searching for jobs and preparing for interviews. Workforce ESL I and II offer ESL instruction in the context of job search documents, goals and activities, such as resume building and mock interviews. Preparation for High School Completion (HSC) also serves the job goals of participants; as one man stated “Going to school and getting your HSC is a very important thing. . . nowadays you have to have that if you want any type of job.” Bicycle Mechanic Training taps into the growing market of bike riders citywide; one third of 32 participants in the first class found jobs even before the training ended.

**Achievements:** In FY 2013-14, there were 1722 enrollees in Henry Street classes; an average of 90% completed their classes. Eighty-one percent of graduates in the Bike Mechanic Skills Academy found jobs, as did 69% of those in Workforce ESL. In Job Essentials Training, 38% found jobs, as did 25% in Jobs Plus HSC (high school completion) classes. The pass rate of HSS high school completion participants who take the Test of Adult Secondary Completion (TASC) exam is 65%, well above the state average.

**Evaluation:** Based on the qualitative program evaluation conducted this fiscal year, Henry Street’s Workforce program achieves all of the outcomes common to all CWE training providers as well as the outcomes specific to community based organizations. With CWE funding, Henry Street serves job seekers who need to learn English; workers who recognize the closed doors they face without a high school diploma; those who need instruction and support looking for work; and those training to meet the needs of the growing bicycle industry. With its extensive array of services, Henry Street can meet many other essential needs of the workers in these classes and of their families, enabling the hardest to employ to succeed in their job search and multiplying the impact of CWE education and training dollars. As Executive Director David Garza says: “CWE funding is the mortar that binds our education and employment services together. . . and allows us to swing our door wide open on the street.”


Conclusion

New York City’s Mayor’s Office, and its Jobs for New Yorkers Task Force of the NYC Workforce Investment Board (WIB), have created a Jobs for New Yorkers Road Map, an approach to workforce investment that emphasizes “a series of connected education, training, and placement services that enable individuals to . . . advance to higher levels of education and employment (page 5).” While CWE and the New York City WIB share a vision of 21st century jobs that offer upward mobility, this vision depends on the capacity of the economy to provide jobs commensurate with the improved skills in which New York City workers, CWE and the WIB invest. In a recent paper from the Aspen Institute, Conway and Dawson argue that this kind of mobility rests on an assumption of job quality that can no longer be assumed in the US economy. They argue instead for a dual workforce investment strategy that not only builds career ladders, but also “raises the floor;” and ask workforce practitioners to: “explore and support interventions that not only encourage career mobility, but also help ensure basic economic stability.” (Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program: Build Ladders and Raise the Floor; Workforce Strategies Supporting Mobility and Stability for Low-Income Workers: page 1).

The three programs profiled here, along with the efforts of the WIB’s Jobs for New Yorkers Task Force and CWE’s wider mix of participating programs, all work toward both entry into and mobility within the City’s sector pathways. As workforce intermediaries, both the WIB and CWE “improve access to career pathways and partner to sustainably improve job quality.” (New York City Mayor’s Office Jobs for New Yorkers Task Force: pages 2, 8). Accordingly, CWE continues to help strengthen the skills of unionized workers in the building trades and thriving sectors such as health care and hospitality, enabling them to climb robust career ladders. Simultaneously, CWE supports community-based organizations that not only offer workforce English, high school completion classes and entry level job training, but also build the capacity of communities to advocate for living wage jobs.

Each of the programs evaluated this year helps New Yorkers upgrade their skills and earn credentials that improve their chances of finding good jobs and of advancing in their work. Local 28 members have contractual assurance that their pay will rise as their expertise in the sheet metal trade develops. At DC1707, day care, Head Start and Home Care workers acquire the skills and certifications necessary to work in their fields, while computer classes welcome members of all participating locals and open their doors to unemployed New Yorkers in need of technological skills. Henry Street participants benefit not only from classes that teach them English for the workforce or help them attain an almost universally required high school completion credential, but also from Henry Street’s participation in LESEN, a network of community providers and area employers that work together to hire and retain workers. Those who attend the Bicycle Skills Academy Training at HSS enter the niche market attached to the promotion of bikes as alternative transportation in our City, a goal supported by the creation of bike lanes and the availability of bikes for rent at key locations. For job seekers and union members lucky enough to find their way to Local 28, DC1707, or Henry Street, the future holds hope and promise at a time when these elude all too many New Yorkers who want to work.
APPENDIX ONE:

Common Findings Across all 3 CWE Funded Program Types based on Focus Group Research in 2011:

- CWE Funding Saves Jobs
- CWE Funding Helps Workers Acquire and Update Computer/Technological Skills
- CWE Funding Transforms the Life Chances of Individuals and Benefits Families and Communities
- CWE Funding Enables Movement Up Sector Specific Career Ladders
- CWE’s Model Differs from Standard Adult Education Practice
- CWE Funding Gives Workers Opportunities to Enter Jobs with Good Wages and Promising Futures
- CWE Support Enables a More Effective Mix of Employment Preparation Options
- CWE Providers have Honed Best Practices across a Range of Industries, Populations, and Communities.

Focus Group Findings by Program Type

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<th>Type of Program</th>
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<td>• CWE’s work-focused education attracts and retains workers</td>
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