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\$5M Grant Awarded to Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County for Civil Engineering Degree Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative

Grant part of Biden-Harris Administration's Initiative to improve job quality and expand access to critical sectors

Concord, CA (October 1, 2024) – The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County (WDBCCC) announced an award of a \$5 million grant from the [Biden-Harris Administration's Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program](#). This significant funding, part of the administration's broader effort to improve job quality and expand access to high-demand careers, will prepare workers for critical infrastructure jobs in civil and transportation engineering.

Civil engineers touch every aspect of our lives, from our roads to our resources, like water and electricity. Demand for civil engineers is high due to heavy investments in projects like building bridges, laying transit systems, upgrading aging infrastructure, and installing smart grids. Additionally, increased focus on sustainable and renewable energy development requires more civil engineers interested in working in the green economy. Finally, data management projects that will structure and use an agency's enterprise-wide data and information for transportation assets are demanding more engineers who are skilled in data science. The [Caltrans Building Information Modeling \(BIM\) for Infrastructure](#) project is one such effort.

The WDBCCC's latest grant will support the Civil Engineering Degree Apprenticeship Pathway (CEDAP), a pioneering initiative aimed at creating a structured educational pathway for entry-level community college students to transition into civil engineering careers. This innovative program includes pre-apprenticeship activities, paid bridge programs, cohort-based learning communities, wraparound support services, and paid internships, culminating in formal apprenticeships as Engineering Aides.

"This initiative is not just ours, it's a collective effort," said Tamia Brown, executive director of the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County. "It aligns with our mission to achieve equity in the region and provide sustainable career pathways for our community members, and we are eager to collaborate with our esteemed partners to bring this project to fruition."

The CEDAP partnerships include three major civil engineering employers, two California State Universities, 11 Community Colleges—including Contra Costa Community College District, regional workforce development boards in northern and southern California, a worker's voice organization, and two workforce intermediaries, the Institute for American Apprenticeships and Growth Sector. CEDAP builds on the successful pilot launched in Los Angeles which has already transitioned low-income community college job seekers to unsubsidized employment with Caltrans as Student Assistants. CEDAP scales the pilot to include Southern California and the San Francisco Bay Area with expansion to Contra Costa County. CEDAP targets women, low-income students, and individuals from ethnicities underrepresented in Civil and Transportation Engineering. For more details about the program, contact Yelena Miakinina at ymiakinina@ehsd.cccounty.us.

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About the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County: a business-led board that builds public-private partnerships with education, economic development, labor, and community organizations to solve complex workforce challenges. Our work achieves equitable economic growth for Contra Costa County. We ensure a pipeline of diverse workforce talent is available to keep local companies competitive. Through our strategic connections and partnerships, we find innovative, sustainable solutions to solve complex workforce issues and leverage public-private resources to benefit the workforce and businesses alike. More at www.AchievingEquityContraCosta.com