



LADOTD OJT Program



July 2021

IN THIS ISSUE

OJT Program

The Code of Federal Regulations, 23 CFR Part 230.111 states that the...*The State highway agency shall determine which Federal-aid highway construction contracts shall include the "Training Special Provisions" (appendix B) and the minimum number of trainees to be specified therein after giving appropriate consideration to the guidelines set forth in § 230.111(c).*

The LADOTD Design Engineers assess the projects to determine the viability of including trainees on the projects. The Design Engineers evaluate the *availability of minorities, women, and disadvantaged for training, duration and dollar value of the contract, potential for effective training, suggested minimum goal for the State, etc.* It is with thoughtful considerations that the Design Engineers denote the numbers of trainees available on projects.

Despite the requirements of the 23 CFR Part 230 and despite the thoughtful considerations by the Design Engineers on the numbers of

trainees available on projects, the trainees are not enrolled on construction projects. The Contractors indicate that as long as the *Supplemental Specification-OJT* states that the OJT Program implementation is voluntary, they may not be able to enroll any minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals as trainees. The Contractors have many contract requirements to be met, and taking on one more, when it is not required, is cumbersome. Additionally, the Contractors are already training all the employees, thus that should suffice for training. While all these statements are sound, there is also one more statement to bring into focus. The LADOTD, similar to all DOTs, must show the number of trainees who have been enrolled and have completed the training programs, at the end of the Calendar Year to the FHWA.

I ask you to contribute towards the accomplishments of the OJT Program by enrolling trainees and providing training to the minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals of

Louisiana. My staff, and I, along with the OJT Supportive Services are available to provide any assistance necessary. (Please refer to page 4 for contact information). Please feel free to reach out to me directly by phone at (225) 379-1382, or by email at Paula.Roddy@la.gov.

Ms. Paula Merrick Roddy
LADOTD Program Director
Compliance Programs Section

What's Inside

-  Current Status, OJT Program, p. 2
-  Minority Availability, p. 3
-  Reentrants Recruiting, p. 4

Current Status of the OJT Program

Chart #1-Trainees Accomplishing Hours shows that six male and one female trainees were continuing with their trainings by accomplishing hours. Four minority and two non-minority male trainees were active. The female trainee continuing in the training program is beneficial to meet the female goals on projects. Contractors can continue to enroll more trainees in the calendar year 2021 for the LADOTD to accomplish the training goals.

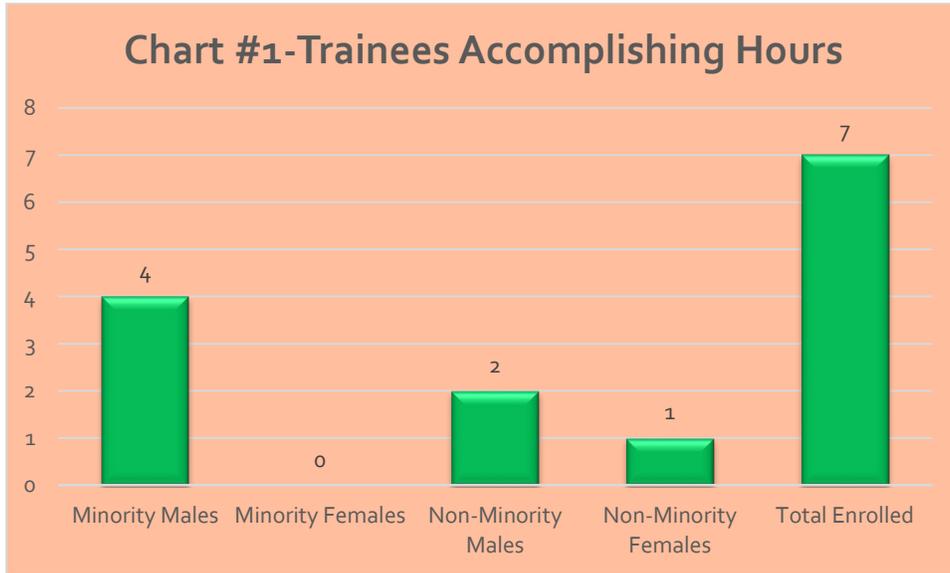
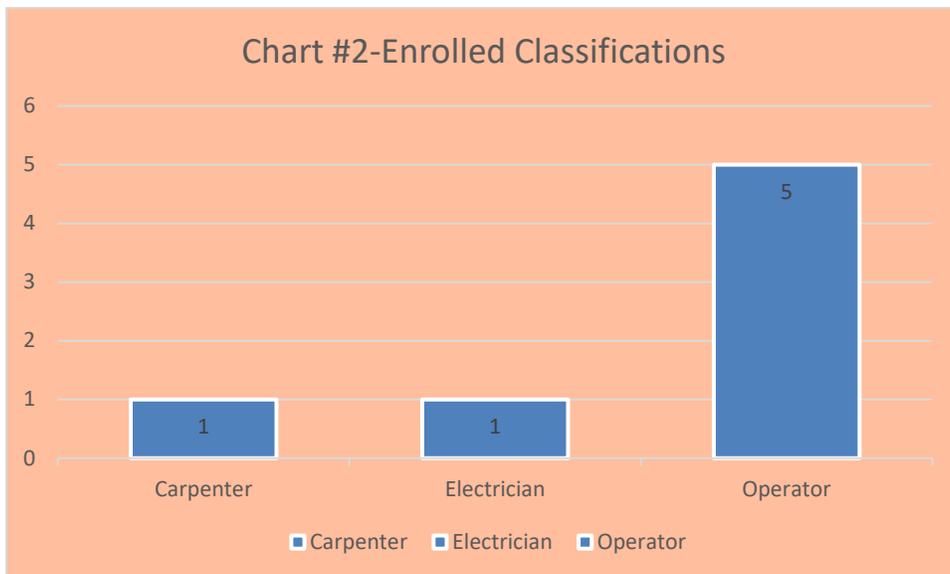
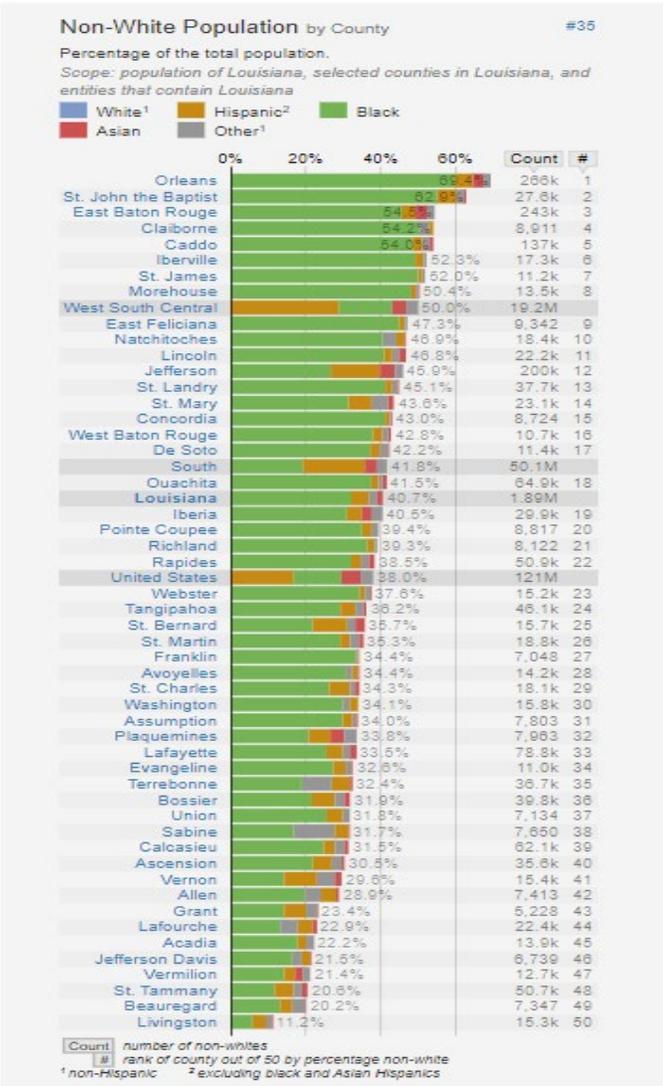


Chart #2-Enrolled Classifications shows that three Equipment Operators, one Carpenter, and one Electrician were enrolled. These trainees are from six companies indicating that more Contractors have become engaged in enrolling trainees and providing trainings. Opportunities exist for many more Contractors to participate in the OJT Programs by enrolling minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals, while receiving \$3.00 per hour reimbursements.





[The Demographic Statistical Atlas of the United States - Statistical Atlas](#)

Availability of Minorities for OJT Program

Some Contractors state that it is difficult to recruit and hire minorities to enroll into the OJT Program. It may be beneficial to consider enrolling minorities in certain areas and less in other areas, depending on the minority populations. In the *Non-White Population by County* Chart, projects in the Orleans Parish should be highly successful in enrolling minority trainees, as the minority population is over 50%. Conversely, projects in St. Tammany, Beauregard, and Livingston Parishes may not be able to enroll as many minorities.

The specific number of minorities in Orleans Parish is 266,000. All projects in Orleans Parish should be able to enroll the total numbers of trainees stipulated in the construction contracts, due to the availability of minority individuals. St. John the Baptist and East Baton Rouge Parishes have minority populations of 276,000 and 243,000, respectively, enabling the enrollments of minorities in these Parishes also.

Over 25 Parishes have minority populations over 25% of the overall populations. Considering that most projects stipulate less than 10 trainees, finding the eligible candidates for the OJT Program should be possible in these Parishes. Recruiting with the Louisiana Workforce Commission, minority organizations, high schools, vo-tech schools, etc. will assist in finding eligible individuals to enroll for the OJT Program and provide the required number of hours for the training classifications. Projects in the areas with significant minority populations should be successful enrolling minorities as trainees for the OJT Program.



Upcoming OJT Program Contractor Forum

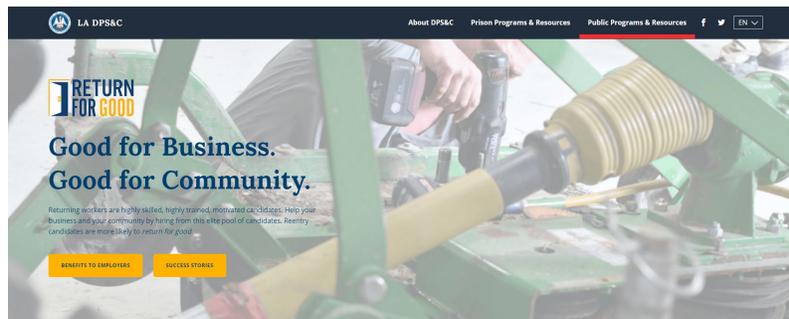
Quarterly, the LADOTD will conduct Contractor's Forums to discuss the OJT Forums. In these forums, come learn about the OJT Program. Get an overview, information on how to implement, provide input on the OJT Program and ask questions. Interact with the LADOTD staff to ensure meeting the OJT goals.

The date of the next OJT Program Contractor's Forum will be announced. You will receive an email invitation for the Contractors' Forum. Please accept the invitation and come join us. Please contact Ms. Joyce Brignac with any questions at (225) 379-1364 or joyce.brignac@la.gov.

Reentrants Recruiting in OJT Program

During the pandemic, and continuing until today, the LADOTD construction Contractors state that recruiting has become difficult. Either some individuals eligible for the OJT Program are not entering the workforce or are already employed. Hiring reentrants may be a key to the employee hiring needs of the construction Contractors.

Daily, reentrants are leaving prison facilities to reenter society. They are looking for jobs to be productive in society. Some reentrants may have the interests and the physical abilities to work in the highway construction work environments. Additionally, some reentrants may have obtained skills during the incarcerations that makes them successful on day one of the jobs. Contractors interested in hiring reentrants, where possible, can obtain information with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections on the following webpage: [Reentry Initiatives & Transitional Work Programs - Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections](#).



Hiring reentrants from the prison facilities is beneficial. According to the website, the unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated individuals is five times that of the general public, meaning that more reentrants are available for hiring. Hiring returning workers helps the businesses. According to the website, hiring returning workers *provides businesses access to tax credits, be able to choose from skilled workforces, help provide stability and second chances to returning employees.*

Watch the *#WorkforceWednesdays Webinar Series* by scrolling down at this link, [Return for Good - Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections](#) to see how other companies have found the solutions to hiring issues with *Second Chance Hiring*. Additionally, the half-way facilities allow opportunities for the residents to work and return to the facilities daily. The Contractors, along with the LADOTD, can ensure that the OJT Program requirements are met, while reducing recidivism. This is a benefit to both the LADOTD and to the State of Louisiana.

OJT Program Contacts

Ms. Juanita Linton, Contract Compliance Program Manager, (225) 379-1364

Ms. Joyce Brignac, OJT Program Specialist, (225) 379-1364

Ms. Sumathi Ravindraraj, OJT/SS Project Manager, (717) 919-6467