



# LADOTD OJT Program



July 2023

## *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Emphasis on Diversity*

Construction is underway with the arrival of the warm summer months. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is providing robust funding for improving the roadway infrastructure of Louisiana. In the BIL, workforce development is of importance, and employment diversity is emphasized.

Hiring employees in the age of ample job opportunities is challenging. Additionally, Contractors sometimes struggle to retain current employees. The LADOTD Contractors are not alone in the hiring process. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) provides services to employers to both hire and retain employees.

Receiving applications from minorities and women in




construction is sometimes challenging, as stated by the Contractors. Reaching out to the LWC and the various minority organizations will be helpful. Additionally, enrolling trainees is an easy process to implement with minimal documentation to ensure the success of the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program.

The LADOTD encourages Contractors to find ways to hire and enroll eligible individuals into the OJT Program. We, in the Compliance Programs Section, along with the OJT Supportive Services, are ready to help you to be successful in implementing the OJT Program. Please reach out to us for assistance. (Please refer to page 4 for contact information). Please also feel free to

reach out to me directly by phone at (225) 379-1382, or by email at [Paula.Roddy@la.gov](mailto:Paula.Roddy@la.gov).

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# Current Status of the OJT Program

Chart #1-Enrolled Trainees in 2023 shows that one trainee was enrolled by one Contractor, to date. One minority male was enrolled. More minority and female trainees could be enrolled to ensure that the LADOTD shows accomplishments on the OJT Program.

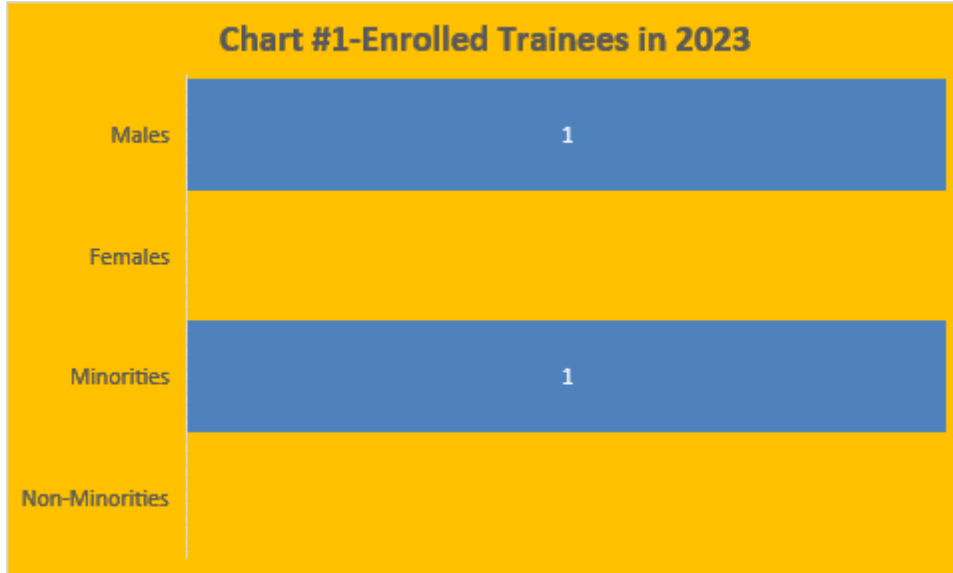
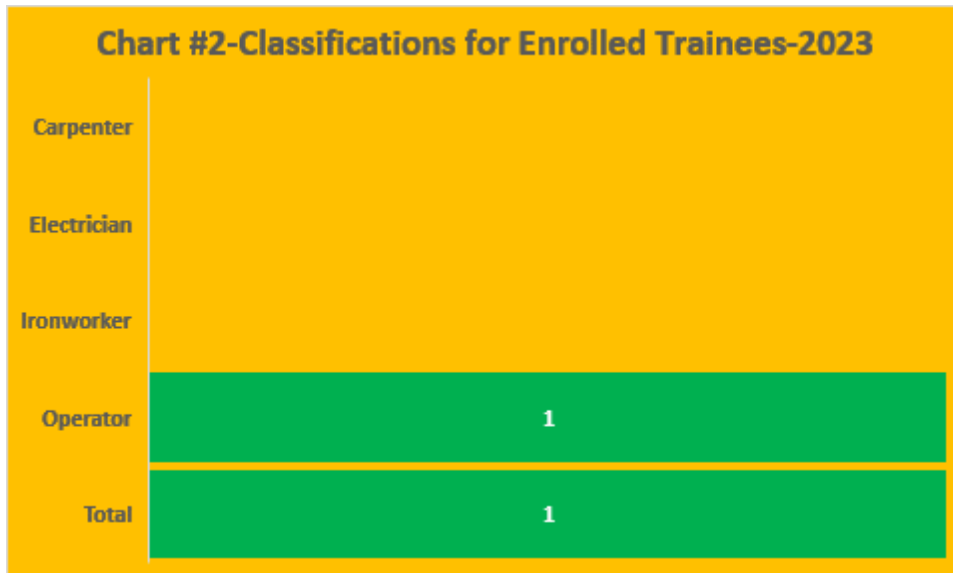


Chart #2-Classifications for Enrolled Trainees 2023 indicates that one Operator, specifically a Piledriver, was enrolled. The number of training hours for each classification varies, as indicated in the *OJT Construction Classifications Manual*. Since the Contractors will need to train new employees, it is beneficial to enroll new hires into the OJT Program and collect the reimbursement of \$3.00 per training hour.



## *Seek Louisiana Workforce Commission's Assistance*



Contractors have hiring needs to fill the jobs in highway construction. Many lament regarding the difficulty of hiring individuals able and interested to work in building roads and bridges. The pandemic transferred workers out of construction to other industries. The previous multiple hurricanes also drew construction workers. Hiring has become difficult.

Contractors, typically, have websites in which the jobseekers can browse for openings and apply. This is only one avenue and Contractors may not realize that another avenue exists, LWC. The LWC provides opportunities to list Contractors' job openings. By listing the job openings, the potential increases for the number of applicants since the LWC is a state agency. The Contractors may also be able to find "laid-off workers" with experience.

Jobseekers wanting employment in Louisiana post resumes and indicate the types of jobs in which they are interested, in the LWC portal. This enables many more jobseekers to view the company's job openings, as the pool of jobseekers may be greater with the LWC.

The LWC conducts job fairs, which is another avenue available to the Contractors. The Contractors can talk directly with all the attendees and pitch the company and

the job openings. Many jobseekers may not have considered working in construction. Showing the positions such as Laborers, Equipment Operators, Carpenters, etc. would be helpful. Additionally, at the job fairs, both men and women attend, including minorities. Opportunities to hire eligible individuals for the OJT Program increase.

Another benefit of working with the LWC is that the jobseekers are provided with some entry skills. The LWC provides job readiness courses, math skills, youth employment programs, etc. These jobseekers are trained to be ready to enter the workforce and be successful at their jobs.

The LWC does not provide services only to the jobseekers. The LWC also provides specific services directly to the Contractors, such as Workers' Compensation information, Unemployment Insurance, filing taxes, labor laws, required labor posters, etc.

The LWC provides many beneficial services to the Contractors. It can facilitate hiring employees, and in particular, minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals to enroll into the OJT Program. Contact the LWC at the following website for additional information: [LAWorks Homepage - Louisiana Workforce Commission](#).

## *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](mailto:joyce.brignac@la.gov).

## *Eligibility of Trainees*

The BIL places emphasis on workforce development, and to bring further equity by increasing the number of minorities and women in Louisiana's highway construction. The LADOTD, along with the LAGC, commits to training 20 eligible individuals annually. This means that many Contractors need to contribute to increasing diversity. The OJT Program in the LADOTD is voluntary, on a per contract basis; however, it also needs to show accomplishment of enrolling and completing 20 trainees annually.



Some Contractors state that while the *OJT Supplemental Specification* is voluntary, they would like to enroll minorities and females into the OJT Program in one or two contracts. Who is eligible? What is required of the Contractors? Here are the answers.

A potential trainee is interested in learning the highway construction crafts. However, the employee must not possess the skills of the proposed training classification. The OJT Program is to enroll someone who will learn a new skill to obtain a construction career. That is not to say that the employee who is skilled in one craft cannot enroll into OJT Program. Another classification can be considered for the training.

What are the requirements from the Contractor's perspective regarding the OJT Program? First, the Superintendent assigns a Foreperson who is a good trainer and mentor. The Project Manager (PM) submits the *OJT Enrollment Form* for approval to the LADOTD's OJT Program Specialist. After receiving approval, the trainee starts. The trainer orients the trainee, and teaches the required skills noted in the *OJT Constructions Manual* for that classification, while providing mentorship. The trainer provides constructive feedback. The PM tracks the trainees' hours in AASHTOWare and submits the hours of training for reimbursement to the LADOTD Project Engineer at \$3.00 per hour reimbursement.

The entire OJT Program process is simple and easy to implement. The benefits exist for all: the trainee learns a trade, the Contractor who must train the individual gets the reimbursement, and the LADOTD complies with the 23 CFR Part 230 stipulation of enrolling trainees.

### **OJT Program Contacts**

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