

***The ACWA Foundation
exists to serve Californians
by advancing opportunity
for all within the water
industry through
education, research, and
workforce development.***

Lisa Mealoy
Executive Director



**ACWA
FOUNDATION**

Statewide Workforce Development

The ACWA Foundation works with organizations to assist in developing a strong pipeline of skilled workers from all communities for the water industry. We will seek to create consortia's to work with education and build pathways to jobs in water.

The ACWA Foundation leverages relationships with public and private sector water organizations and education to promote early awareness of career opportunities in water.



ACWA
FOUNDATION

The ACWA Foundation looks to collaborate statewide to ensure the water workforce remains strong and responsive to industry needs by providing opportunities for professionals to share knowledge and experience with upcoming workforce.



WFRS Overview

State of the Water Sector

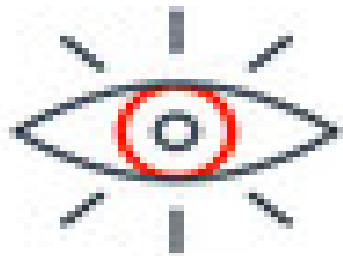
- North American operations and maintenance staffing is at a critical transition with the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation.
- The number of younger staff entering the water sector is insufficient to meet demand.
- There's a widespread loss of expertise, affecting 40 to 75% of staff in public and private water sectors and related industries.
- This trend is creating a significant gap in qualified staffing.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this loss of personnel.
- There is an urgent need for new, qualified, and trained operations and maintenance staff to ensure public health and environmental safety.
- High school shop programs and trades training, once prevalent, have been reduced or eliminated in many parts of North America.
- Opportunities for training in water and wastewater system operations and maintenance are now limited.



- WorkForce Resource Solutions (WFRS) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization focused on developing a Water and Wastewater Apprenticeship Program for Operations and Maintenance Staff.
- The Program aims to build the next generation of Water And Waster Operations and Maintenance Professionals in North America.
- The initial focus of the training program is on operations staff, with plans to expand to maintenance staff training in the future.
- The Apprenticeship Training Program is intended to be implemented through the Community College System in partnership with the public and private sectors.
- The program will be registered with and meets the requirements of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Apprenticeship.

All operations training will use the standardized ABC Testing Need-to-Know Criteria. ABC Criteria is the backbone of the program because it is accepted in 48 states and all Canadian Provinces. Each state and province may have additional information added as needed to meet specific criteria.





VISION

To provide a highly
trained and motivated
cadre of professionals for
the water sector
workforce



MISSION

To fill the gap from O&M to
management for critical
infrastructure, to protect what
matters most – the Client's staff and
facilities



VALUES

Honesty
Integrity
Professionalism
Continuous Improvement
Diversity
Quality

WFRS First Three Years starting January 1, 2026

Metrics – Proposed Key Performance Indicators

Pre-Apprenticeship Program submitted for approval – DOL

Pre-Apprenticeship Program up and running

Measurement of Success of 80% in OJT –

Performance evaluation and Knowledge Checks
each 6 months, Supervisor reports and evaluations

Build Curricula in First year

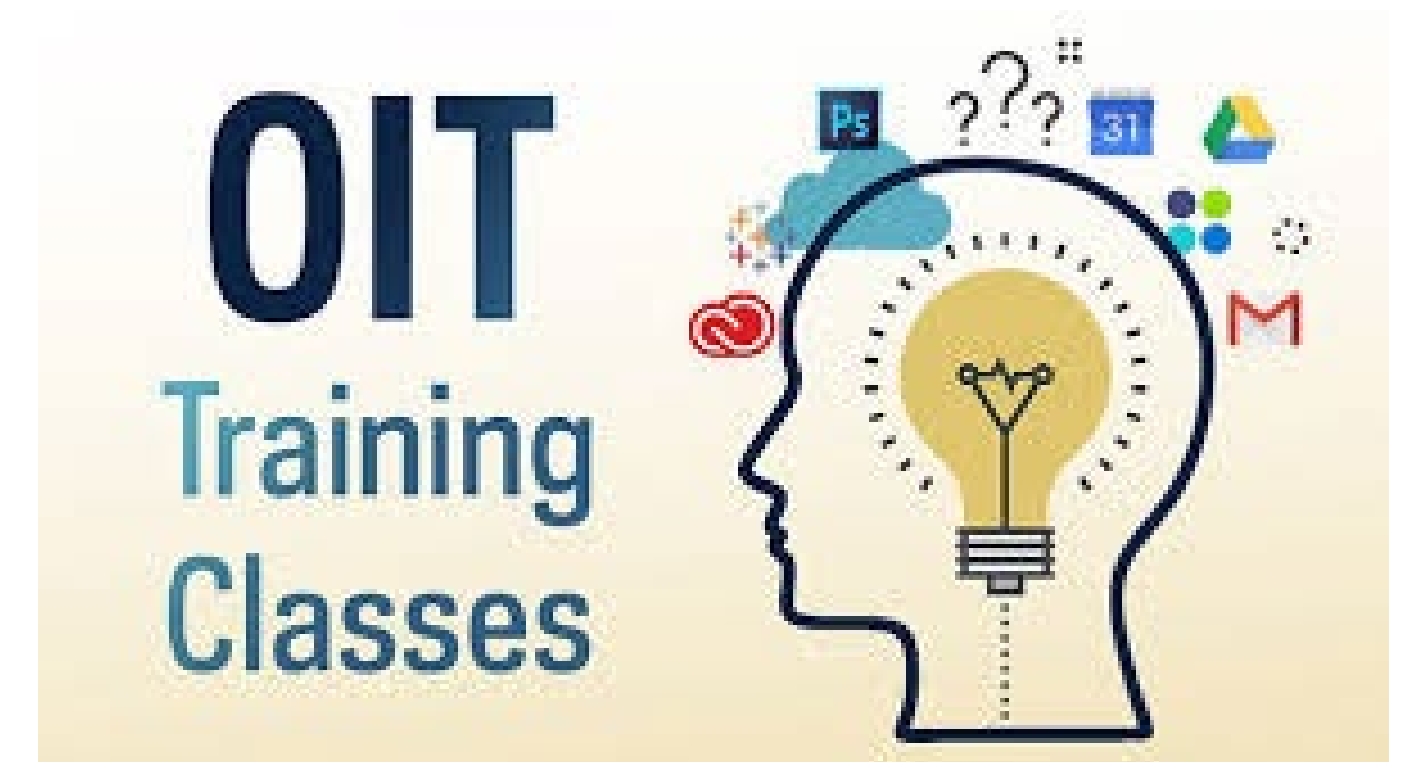
Submitted for approval by HI Operator Certification Board

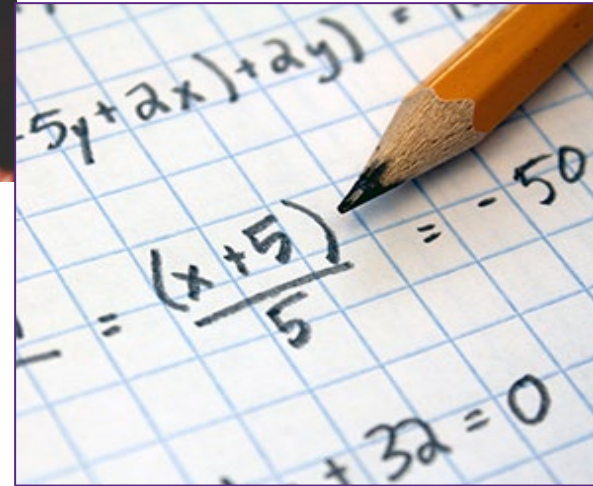
Apprenticeship Program submitted for approval – DOL

Expand curricula in second year

Attrition rate less than 20%

Actual apprentices in the program





Pre-Apprenticeship Qualification Program

Currently in development – This will cover the following basic skills:

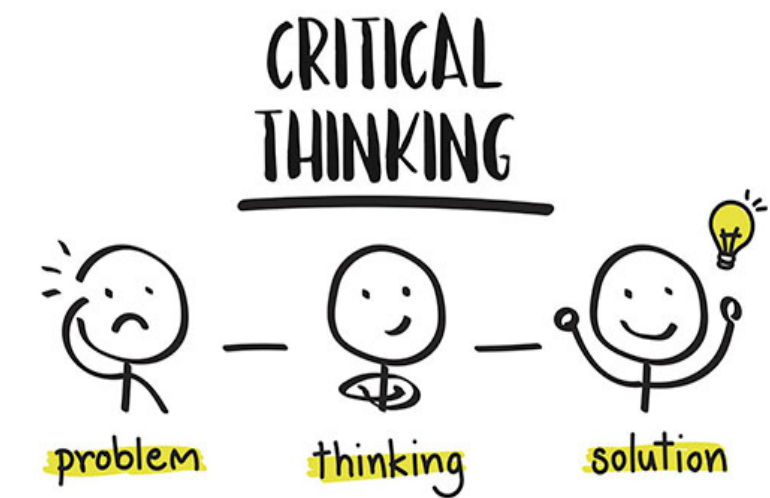
Writing skills/ soft skills

Math skills

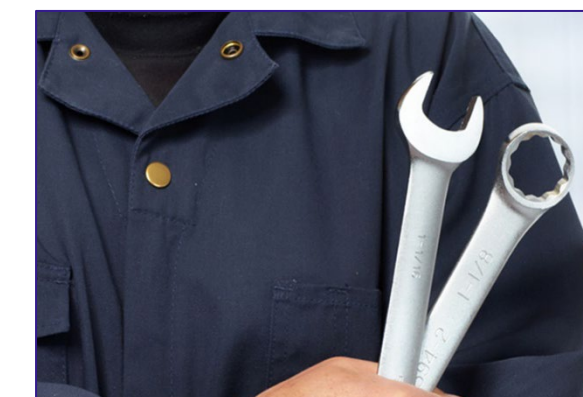
Critical thinking

Mechanical aptitude – including any background (if available) in running equipment, machine interface, equipment repair, rebuild, etc.

Digital skills – using digital tools



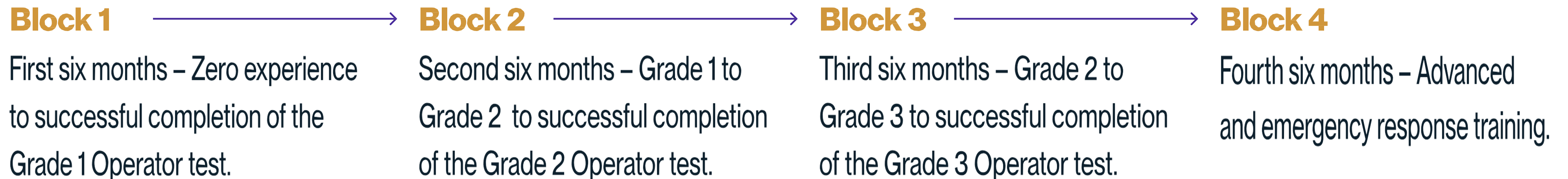
This program could be put into a high school program, to feed into a Junior/Community college program



Framework for the Program

The Apprenticeship Training Program is designed to be completed within a 24-month period. The training includes both classroom and On-The-Job-Training, (OJT) divided into 4-6-month blocks.

Each month - classroom training (using WEF and Sacramento State training materials) and OJT Training at a specific facility. Sponsor organizations commit to hosting these apprentices at their facilities, for the OJT portion of the program.



Sponsor Organizations

- Agencies will sponsor apprentices at their facilities as part of the WFRS Apprenticeship Training Program.
- During on-the-job training WFRS will provide a standardized program framework for Agency Sponsors to guide apprentices.
- Apprentices will learn specific operational requirements of the sponsoring agencies.
- All costs, including salaries, benefits, and liability insurance for staff are covered by the program.
- Agency Sponsors contribute a fixed fee to WFRS, approximately 55 to 60% of the total cost for each apprentice they sponsor.
- Approval from the Department of Labor (DOL) enables WFRS to access grant funding.
- Additional sponsorship is being sought to cover the remaining program costs.



Sponsor Organizations

- ✓ Sponsors will have the opportunity to engage with WFRS to meet their projected future needs for O&M staff
- ✓ Sponsors will have the first opportunity to hire operators who have completed the apprenticeship program.
- ✓ Sponsors will see a “de-risking” of their hiring process, since the staff hired from the Apprenticeship Training Program will be qualified and vetted during the training process .
- ✓ During this Apprenticeship Training Program, the Sponsors will have the opportunity to increase their staff at a reduced cost.
- ✓ Sponsors will have confidence that the Licensed operators who have completed the Apprenticeship Training Program have gained institutional knowledge from the sponsor facilities, acquired during their on the job work in the Apprenticeship Training Program.



**WORK FORCE
RESOURCE
SOLUTIONS**

**Director of Business Development
Colter Andersen**

Class T5 Water Operator CA

Class D5 Distribution Operator CA

Colter.Andersen@wfrsapp.org

Colter@getots.com

310-702-4951

**Chief Executive Officer
Rhonda E. Harris**

P.E. P.ENG, BCEE, PMP, H.AWWA, F.WEF

Class A Water Operator TX

Class A Wastewater Operator TX

TX W/WW Trainer

Rhonda.Harris@wfrsapp.org

Rhonda@getots.com

214-771-1559





ACWA FOUNDATION



**WORK FORCE
RESOURCE
SOLUTIONS**

**Lisa Mealoy
Executive Director**

**Phone 916.804.9381
Email lmealoy@acwa-foundation.org**

**Colter Andersen
Director of Business Development**

**Phone 442.888.5031 x408
Phone 310.702.4951 Mobile
Email Colter@getots.com**