

# Florida Transportation Builders Association's Workforce Strategies

Presented by Darcy Foster, Co-Chair FTBA Work Group  
For the ARTBA Workforce Development Council – Virtual Meeting  
April 5, 2023



# FTBA's Workforce Advocacy History

- 2019 FTBA supported and was influential in the passage of a FDOT Statewide Workforce Development Program that included a \$2.5M, 3-year dedicated funding source.
- 2020 FTBA supported FDOT Work Plan workforce funding post COVID-driven legislative budget constraints – elimination of formal program and dedicated funding (FDOT retained authority to administer a workforce program).
- 2022 FTBA advocated legislatively and received \$1M for marketing road and bridge career paths.



Build More Than a Job... Build a Life.

## Welcome to your future

Florida's Statewide Workforce Development Program works with community partners to identify and connect qualified workers with contractors for gainful employment on roadway construction projects. The program is working throughout the state to provide opportunities – for both experienced and entry-level workers – to build successful careers to improve lives.



Florida Transportation Builders Association Magazine – Summer 2019

## A GATEWAY TO NEW JOBS

### FDOT DEVELOPS PILOT PROGRAM TO ADDRESS WORKER SHORTAGE

By Lori Murray, TBA Marketing & Media

Florida is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation, ranked fourth with a growth rate of 1.1% (World Population Review). Many of its cities, especially in the Tampa-Orlando Corridor, are leading this growth, which is expected to continue. It is the driving force behind a large number of new highway construction projects slated for the next few years and beyond. From large initiatives like the Gateway Expressway and the Howard Frankland Bridge to smaller, but equally necessary, projects at the city and county level, there appears to be plenty of work for roadbuilders in the foreseeable future. That's the good news.

Unfortunately, there is also a challenge, and it comes in the form of a shortage of trained workers. As it turns out, roads aren't the only things being built. Vertical and residential construction is also on the rise, and contractors in these industries are competing for the same workforce, which is further exacerbating the problem.

**"We have to start thinking about how we build the future. Having plenty of money doesn't do anything if we don't have a workforce that can do the work. If you think about the amount of infrastructure investments, the workforce is not large enough at this point to support that."**

Ed McKinney, FDOT District 7 Planning & Environmental Administrator

predominantly minority neighborhoods – recognized that these major public infrastructure projects would create an economic opportunity for the region, and they wanted to be a part of it. In light of these concerns, FDOT District 7 leaders decided to take a step back and examine how a workforce development program might help. They collaborated with project co-lead Tampa Bay Next and subsequently created the Tampa Bay Next Workforce Development Gateway Expressway Pilot Program.

Workforce development was a relatively new concept for the state, but the Gateway Expressway project seemed like a good place to start. The project contractor, Archer Western-de Moya Joint Venture, desperately needed workers and agreed to participate. At that point, HNTB, an infrastructure solutions firm, was already on board as the owner's representative and was eager to work on the public involvement component.

To get things off the ground, the leaders of the program turned to a host of community partners for support. These organizations were already offering a wide range of services to minorities in predominantly low-income, high-unemployment areas. "A lot of nonprofits in the area are putting recruitment efforts for unemployed or underemployed residents. We developed community partnerships with these entities, which are already offering workforce readiness programs and services and ongoing case management," said Darcy Foster, public involvement manager at HNTB.

getting back to work," said Ed McKinney, District 7 Planning & Environmental Administrator.

Grant Cool, project manager for the Gateway Expressway project and Central Florida Area Manager at The de Moya Group, agrees that none of this would be possible without the community partners. "The community partners play a big role, and getting that lined up early on allows us to be successful. They truly are the ones that do the screening process. For that reason, they might come to us with four standout individuals who they think would really excel."

They also partnered with OnBoardJobs, an FDOT program that helps job seekers gain employment on road and bridge construction projects with local contractors. The focus of OnBoardJobs is to recruit a viable construction workforce and to increase the number of minorities, females and veterans on federal- and state-funded road and bridge construction contracts. "Florida has identified an opportunity to provide support to promote the road construction industry, and it's really in partnership with the contractors that we will see success," said Jill Cappadora, associate vice president of Quest Corporation of America, the program manager for OnBoardJobs. "It's important for them to help us understand their needs, including the types of skills they will need in the future."

#### HOW IT WORKS

When job candidates register to participate in the program they are screened by community partners who then share that information and provide recommendations to employers.

# FTBA's Support: FDOT Statewide Workforce

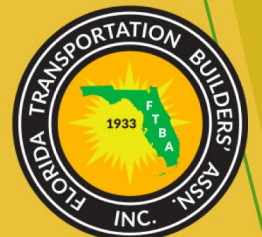
- In 2020 FDOT Workforce Development Program was kicked off.
  - Group Course Instruction Initiaves
  - Contractor Job-readiness Hiring and Training Initiative
  - In late 2021 additional initiaves were developed and currently available:

## Adult-targeted Programs:

- Group Construction Workshop
- Contractors Job-Readiness Hiring and Training
- Correctional Transition Academy
- OnBoard4Jobs Construction Careers
- Veteran Training Course

## Student-targeted Programs:

- Florida Construction Career Days Participation
- Student Construction Internship
- Student Construction Career Academy



# FTBA's Marketing

- In 2022 a pilot marketing program was kicked off by an infusion of \$200,000 by FDOT.
  - Funds were used for digital advertisements and billboards (3 key urban areas).



2c

*Apply Today*

Look no further...

**ENGINEERS.**  
**CDL DRIVERS.**  
**EQUIPMENT OPERATORS.**

[www.FloridaRoadJobs.com](http://www.FloridaRoadJobs.com)

This advertisement features a background image of a highway under construction with a crane. The text is overlaid in various colors and fonts, including a script font for 'Apply Today'.



2d

**FULL TIME. BENEFITS. STABILITY.**

*Apply Today!* [www.FloridaRoadJobs.com](http://www.FloridaRoadJobs.com)

Earn up to \$25/hr. to Start

This advertisement features a background image of a yellow excavator and a yellow tractor working on a dirt mound. The text is overlaid in bold, blocky fonts. A yellow diamond-shaped sign on the right contains the text 'Earn up to \$25/hr. to Start'.



2b

**NOT JUST A JOB...**  
**A CAREER.**

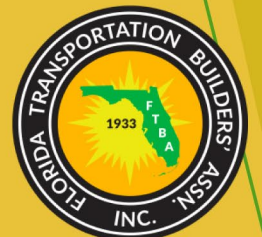
Consider a career in road and bridge construction.

**FULL TIME. BENEFITS. STABILITY.**

Earn up to \$25/hr. to Start

*Apply Today*  
[www.FloridaRoadJobs.com](http://www.FloridaRoadJobs.com)

This advertisement features a background image of a blue sky with clouds. The text is overlaid in bold, blocky fonts. A yellow diamond-shaped sign on the right contains the text 'Earn up to \$25/hr. to Start'. The website URL is at the bottom right.



# FTBA's Marketing Continued

- 2023 \$1M legislative appropriation. A multi-phased marketing program was kicked off.
  - Phases (PH):
    - PH 1: Status – Digital ads and billboards (3 key urban areas and surrounding urban sectors) are active.
    - PH 2: Social Media – Facebook and LinkedIn are active.
    - PH 3: Streaming Service Ads and/or TV Ads – future expansion.
    - PH 4: Radio and print ads in rural papers – future expansion.



**FIND FULL-TIME + OVERTIME PAY,  
BENEFITS, STABILITY  
in Road & Bridge Construction**

**All Types  
of Positions  
Available**

*Apply Today*  
FloridaRoadJobs.com

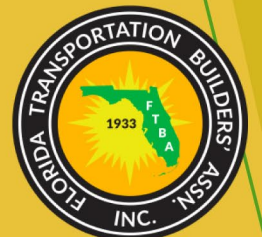


**BUILD  
A CAREER  
THAT PAYS**

*No Experience Necessary  
Training Provided*

**Starting  
Wage of  
\$15-\$25/hr.**

*Apply Today*  
FloridaRoadJobs.com

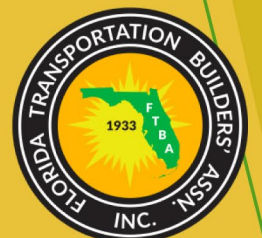
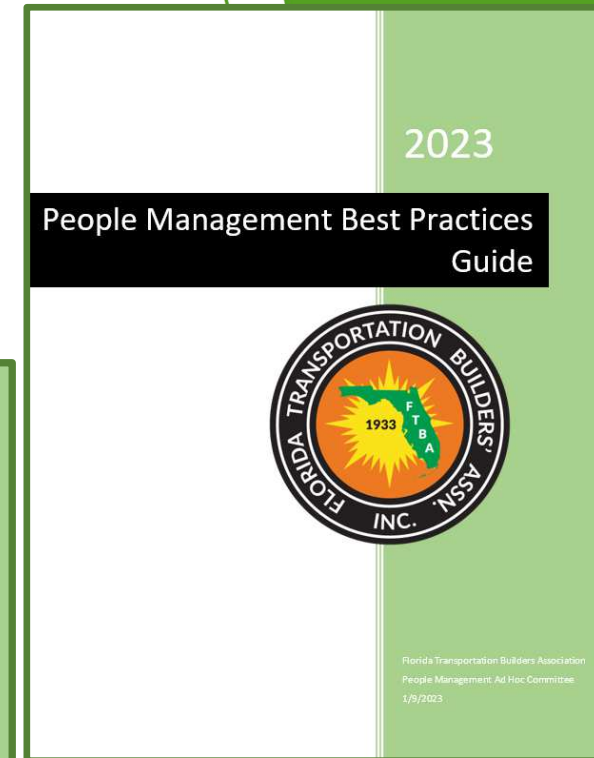
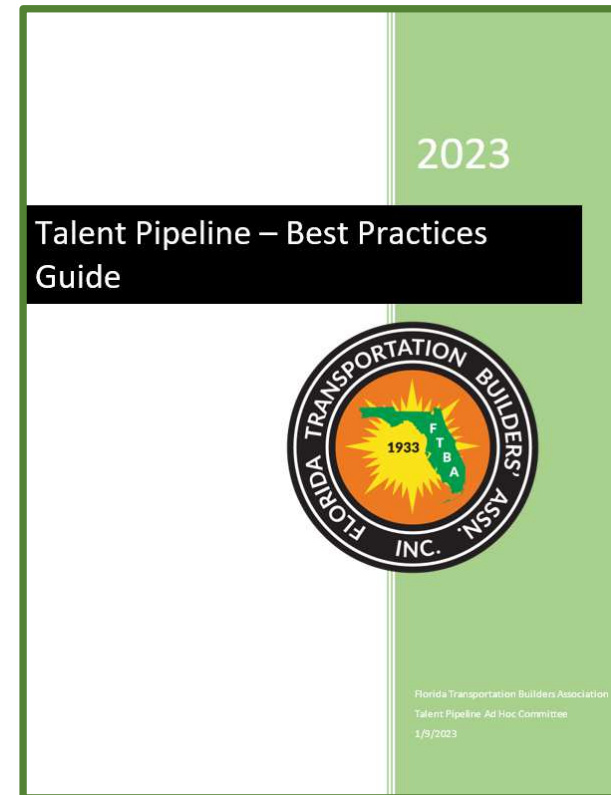


# FTBA Best Practices Guides

- Best Practices Guides were developed by FTBA member Work Group participants.
- Purpose of the Guides: Share the Florida civil construction industry's "lessons learned" to assist contractors to **plan** and **manage** their workforce needs in terms of **recruiting, hiring, training** and **retaining** staff.

Documents Published in January 2023

- **Talent Pipeline**
- **People Management**



# FTBA Talent Pipeline & People Management – Benefits of Practices Guides

- Builds long-term network with schools
- Guides students through school training options, assist in curriculum development, promote internships and recruit post graduation
- Promotes a construction company's support for continued training / certification and most importantly provides opportunities to accelerate career growth
- Encourages career advancement with annual “committed” training, and reskill incentives
- Advances competitive employment benefits (hourly rate / salary and overall benefits package)



# Talent Pipeline Best Practices Highlights

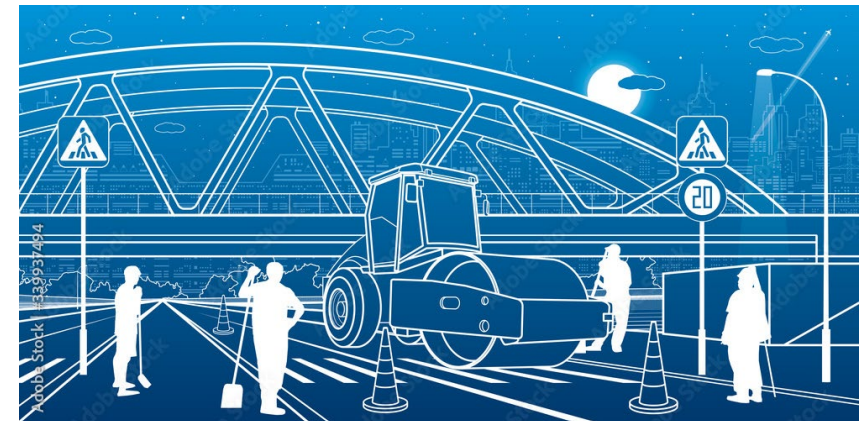
- Middle School (8 to 12 yrs.)
  - Day Summer Camp – targets innovative fun build kit designed to learn about construction
  - Speakers Bureau – Discuss types of work
  - Classroom Learning Lab
- High School (12 to 18 yrs.) Classroom Instruction
  - Sponsorship (advertising to attract interest)
  - Provide packets to showcase employment opportunity and career path in the company
  - Speakers Bureau – Discuss early career opportunities
  - Curriculum Development in school trade programs
  - Construction Career Days
  - Dual Enrollment Promotion
  - Mentorship
  - Internships
- Trade School (18+ yrs.) Classroom
  - Sponsorship (advertising to attract interest)
  - Actively Internships & Co-ops training
  - Partner with Community Partners (CareerSource Florida Offices – State Run Employment Boards)
  - Job Fairs
  - Provide highlights to showcase employment opportunity and career path in the company
  - Speakers Bureau – Discuss Early Career Opportunities
  - Curriculum Development in School Trade Programs
  - Mentorship
  - Internships



# People Management Best Practices Highlights

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- Sharing human resource processes, strategies and tools scaled to company employment size-categorizations
  - Recruitment (Online platforms and paid advertisements)
  - Pre-Screen (online tools for application reviews [License and verification])
  - Onboarding (in-person or digital)
  - Training (new candidate, on-the-job training and reskill)
  - Benefits Packages (medical, referral programs, and retirement savings)
  - Leave Policy
  - Community Engagement (Corporate sponsorships and volunteerism)
  - Succession Planning (strategies to fill / replace key positions, based on a career path development progression)
  - Mentorship Programs (internal or external opportunities)



# Thank you!



Questions or Comments...

