

*New England Region*

## **Recruitment and Retention in Energy Efficiency Construction**

**Scott Gustafson**

*Director of Organizing*

# Who we are...

- ▶ 1 million member strong union – US and Canada
- ▶ Construction, public service employees, mail handlers
- ▶ 65,000 members in New England
- ▶ Bridges, highways, vertical building, asbestos and hazardous waste remediation, pipeline and utility, energy efficiency... just to name a few!
- ▶ Departments on behalf of our members national/local....

*Laborers' Health and Safety Fund (LHSFNA)*

*Laborers' Employer Cooperation Trust (LECET)*

*LIUNA Training and Education Fund*

*Organizing, Legislative, Corporate Affairs, Media*

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# Recruiting a New Workforce

## Strategy

- ▶ Partner w/ Pre-Apprenticeship programs – YouthBuild, Building Futures, etc.
  - ▶ Partner with community groups
  - ▶ Engage with WIBs and local career centers
- Target individuals with prior experience and/or construction training
- Place individuals in Weatherization Training Program

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# Weatherization Training Program

- ▶ LIUNA–WTP nationally recognized curriculum
- ▶ Exceeds BPI and DOE WAP Core Competencies
- ▶ 3 Pathways – Technician/Installer, Supervisor, Auditor
- ▶ Prerequisite training – Gen Con, Safety, Life Skills
- ▶ Building Science, insulation, air sealing, efficiency tests...
- ▶ OSHA 10 and EPA Lead Renovator included!
- ▶ Graduates are Certified and Credentialed

The logo for LIUNA! is displayed in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving it a 3D appearance. The logo is positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, above a decorative blue and black geometric shape.

# National Home Performance Campaign

- ▶ Build career pathways in weatherization/energy efficiency
  - ▶ Work with community partners to identify candidates and support trainees through rigorous and rewarding WTP (Community Labor United)
  - ▶ Build contractor partnerships and help businesses grow
  - ▶ Political action and Policy advocacy
  - ▶ Consumer and market research initiative
- “LIUNA wants to scale a viable American industry that will retrofit millions of poorly insulated homes and create thousands of family supporting jobs.”***

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# CONTRACTORS?

- ▶ Biggest Issue/Barrier to Growth?
- ▶ Qualified, Trained, Efficient Workforce?

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# My Personal Experience

- ▶ Green Worker (with good work ethic)
- ▶ General Construction Worker
- ▶ Foreman
- ▶ General Foreman
- ▶ Regional Organizer
- ▶ Regional Organizing Coordinator
- ▶ Director of Organizing (Laborers' New England Region)

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# Pathway to Success

- ▶ Training Module
- ▶ Train Who for What (chicken or the egg/worker disappointment factor)
- ▶ Had a contractor but no work (good agreement/negotiated wages and benefits)
- ▶ Procurement Agents? CAPS/State Agencies (controlled work which had historically performed with non-union contractors)
- ▶ The Right Mix (committed contractors, most comprehensive training program able to handle large numbers of members at once and upon demand, large pool of recruited workers with aspirations for growth in industry and a career path).

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# Recent Success

- ▶ Trained and placed 85 workers in last 5 months w/ an aggressive, responsible contractor – MA RI
- ▶ Partnered with Youth Build Boston, Building Futures RI and Helmets to Hardhats
- ▶ Contractor/Union working together on recruiting
- ▶ Promote skill development and career pathways



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# Contractor/Community

## Contractor

- Aggressive, highly skilled contractors reinforce lessons learned in training
- Contractor input critical to successful training program
- Bridges gap between training and job market – Major issue in workforce development currently

## Community

- Provides recruitment pool
- Life/employability training essential to retention

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# Success Story

- ▶ Lowell, Massachusetts
- ▶ Mattapan, Massachusetts
- ▶ Everett, Massachusetts
- ▶ Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts
- ▶ Dedham, Massachusetts
- ▶ Sudbury, Massachusetts

Largest WX/Home Performance Contractor in New England Completed over 1000, units in six month period.

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# Recruiting Points to Consider

- ▶ Recognize low success rate; diligence in interview/screening process
- ▶ Train on demand; be honest with community partners
- ▶ Visibility w/ trainees; discuss contractor, expectations, union, future
- ▶ Assess quality of pre-apprenticeship programs; preparation is key going forward

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# Retention Points to Consider

- ▶ Utilize community partner support systems for the recruits; certain populations need guidance transitioning into work
- ▶ Recurring Refresher training options; builds stronger workforce and creates personal incentive to be better
- ▶ Utilize WIB for continued OJT , Workforce Training Board relationships and Community Workforce Agreements.

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# Campaign Cont'd

- ▶ Work to establish training standards nationally
- ▶ Fight for responsible contractors and encourage industry growth
- ▶ Advocate for private investment for long term sustainability
- ▶ Build consumer demand
- ▶ Climate benefits

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