

# Powering Success: Tools for Embedding DEIA into Registered Apprenticeships

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# About SEIA

*Building a strong solar industry to power America*



Federal, State &  
Local Policy



Climate &  
Equity



Managing  
Growth



Trade, Technology  
& Manufacturing

# DEIJ Leadership Council

**As the national trade association for solar companies in the U.S., we have a unique position, and therefore a unique responsibility, to lead the industry forward and create a more just and equitable energy future.**



# Today's Presenters



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Director of Equitable Workforce Strategies, IREC



Brie O'Malley  
Director, ReVision Energy Training Center

# Agenda

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- Introduction from SEIA
- Dr. Janell Hills-Thomas from IREC
- Conversation with ReVision and Blue Ridge Power
- Q&A

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion in Registered Apprenticeships in Clean Energy



# About Me



Dr. Janell Hills-Thomas  
Director, Equitable Workforce Strategies, IREC



**U.S. Department of Labor  
Employment and Training Administration**

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# Buckle Up! We Have A Lot To Cover...

- Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs)
- Benefits of Registered Apprenticeship Programs
- **DEIA in Registered Apprenticeships**
- Benefits of DEIA
- Veterans
- Recruitment
- Retention
- EEO
- Affirmative Action

# Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) Overview

- **Industry-Led** – Apprenticeable occupations are industry-vetted and approved to ensure alignment with business needs.
- **Paid Job** – Apprentices are paid employees who produce high-quality work while they learn skills that enhance their employers' needs.
- **Structured On-the-Job Learning** – Develops skilled workers through structured learning in a work setting under supervision of a skilled mentor.
- **Supplemental Education** – Related instruction supports attainment of job knowledge and skills through virtual or in-person classroom education.

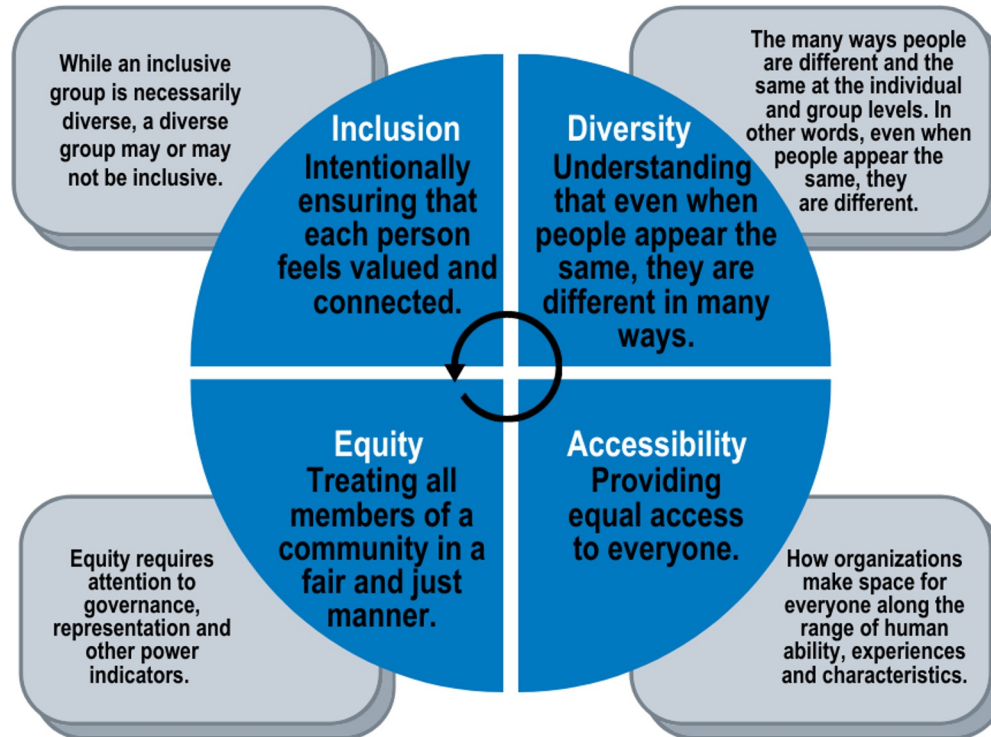
# Benefits of Apprenticeships for Employers AND Workers

- **Proven Workforce Development Model** – Concept used by employers since the Middle Ages – Not just for Construction Trades!
- **Effective Recruitment Tool** – Apprenticeships are attractive to job seekers and the labor system supports connecting people to Apprenticeship opportunities!
- **Credentials** - Offers a portable, nationally-recognized credential to be issued at the completion of the program
- **Diversity** – Regulations ensure RAPs have strong non-discrimination, anti-harassment, and equal employment opportunity recruitment practices.

# SCALING DEIA IN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS

The Department of Labor aims to ensure **diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA)** in opportunities for all populations, especially **underserved populations**, through Registered Apprenticeships.

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility



# Benefits of DEIA

- Diversity of thought enhances innovation by 20%
- Inclusive organizations see greater return on their investment
- Increase productivity
- Improves market share
- Enhance organizational reputation
- Expands the recruitment pipeline
- WOTC Tax Credits for targeted groups

# Underrepresented / Underserved Populations (Dept. of Labor Definitions)

## Underrepresented

populations which may include women, people of color, and individuals with disabilities.

## Underserved

populations which may include veterans, justice-impacted individuals, youth, and those in rural communities.

# Underserved Communities

Black & African Americans	Women
Hispanic & Latino	LGBTQ+
Native American, Native Alaskan, & Indigenous People Asian American, Native Hawaiian, & Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, North African	Pregnancy
Parents	Caregivers



## Underserved Communities, cont

Older Age	1st Generation Professionals
Formerly Incarcerated Inhabitants of Rural Areas,  Veterans & Military Spouses	Limited English Proficiency
Persistent Poverty	Older Age
Religions Beliefs	Persons with disabilities

# Veterans in Registered Apprenticeships

*“Veteran friendly to Veteran ready”*

- What are some of the keys to **effectively screening** veteran resumes and interviewing veteran candidates?
- What programs or policies has your organization successfully implemented for **recruiting, onboarding, and integrating veteran hires?**
- What resources, organizations, and programs have you leveraged to support the **engagement, development, and retention of your veterans?**

# Benefits of Hiring Veterans in Registered Apprenticeship

Higher  
Retention

Quick  
Learners

Team  
Building  
Skills

Problem  
Solvers

Tax  
Credits

# GI Bill Benefits

- GI Bill
- The Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty

## To be used for:

- College
- Graduate Programs
- RAPs

# DEIA Focused Outreach

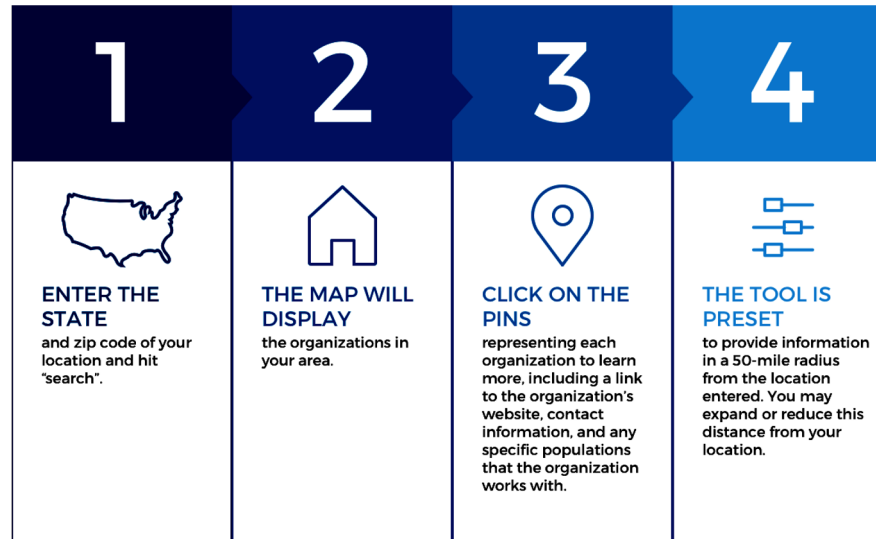
- Screen In, Not Out
- Hold community open houses
- Ensure diversity of language and images in outreach materials
- Use transparent and accessible practices to diversify recruitment
- Engage diverse recruitment partners

# Recruitment

All RAP sponsors are required to conduct **universal** outreach and recruitment, which entails reaching out to organizations within your relevant recruitment area that can refer candidates from all demographic groups.

# Universal Outreach Tool

A **clickable map** that allows sponsors to quickly locate organizations in their area.



# Retention

- Build a culture of belonging and incorporate participant voices
- Develop training and classroom instruction to be accessible to and representative of apprentices.
- Include diverse leaders and mentors who provide quality leadership and mentorship.
- Provide wraparound support services (childcare, transportation vouchers, etc.)



# EEO Regulations

- Prohibits sponsors of RAP from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, and genetic information.
- Take concrete and actionable steps to ensure a discrimination-free and harassment-free environment

## EEO Regulations

- Sponsors are responsible for ensuring all aspects of the RAP, including on-the-job learning (OJL) and related instruction (RI) components and mentoring are in compliance with the EEO regulations.
- Post the EEO pledge and information on the rights on apprentices and applicants.

## Affirmative Action Plans

- A tool designed to assist a sponsor in detecting, diagnosing, and correcting any barriers to equal opportunity that may exist in its apprenticeship program
- Designed to promote and ensure equal opportunity in apprenticeship
- Written documentation of sponsors' intended plans to increase diversity - **2 years from the date of registering the program**
- Sponsors must also conduct targeted outreach and recruitment, if necessary

# Developing Affirmative Actions Plans

- Analyses comparing the demographic characteristics of your apprentice workforce to the demographics of the available workforce in your recruitment area
- When these analyses reveal that one or more demographic groups (sex, race, or ethnicity) is underrepresented in your apprentice workforce, you must conduct targeted outreach and recruitment

# Affirmative Action Plans Exemptions

- If a program has fewer than five apprentices (this exemption is based on the number of apprentices per program sponsor -- not per participating employer)
- If a program can demonstrate that it has an affirmative action plan covering apprentices (aligned with the Executive Orders)

# LINKS AND RESOURCES!

## EEO

- EEO Pledge Language <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/eeo-pledge-language.pdf>
- EEO Circular - [https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/bulletins/circular-2023-01\\_0.pdf](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/bulletins/circular-2023-01_0.pdf)

## Affirmative Action Plans

- [Developing Affirmative Action Programs and Plans: A Guide for Registered Apprenticeship Program Sponsors](#)
- [Affirmative Action Boilerplate](#)
- [Affirmative Action Reference Guide](#)

# LINKS AND RESOURCES!

- DEIA in apprenticeship information can be found at - <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/>
- DEIA – Partnership in Inclusive Apprenticeship (PIA) - <https://inclusiveapprenticeship.org/clean-energy-spotlight/>
- Dept. of Labor Universal Outreach Tool - <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/apprenticeship/eeo/recruitment/outreach-tool>
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) - <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wotc>
- National Center for Women’s Equity in Apprenticeship and Employment’s Registered Apprenticeship Equity Survey - [https://womensequitycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/RAPsurvey\\_July2019\\_revision.pdf](https://womensequitycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/RAPsurvey_July2019_revision.pdf)

# LINKS AND RESOURCES!

## Veterans & Military Spouses

- GI Bill Benefits for RAPs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKkG1lu6-KI>
- US Dept. of Veterans Affairs - <https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/>
- Solar Ready Veterans Network - <https://irecusa.org/programs/solar-ready-vets/>
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) - <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wotc>



# THANK YOU

JANELL HILLS - THOMAS

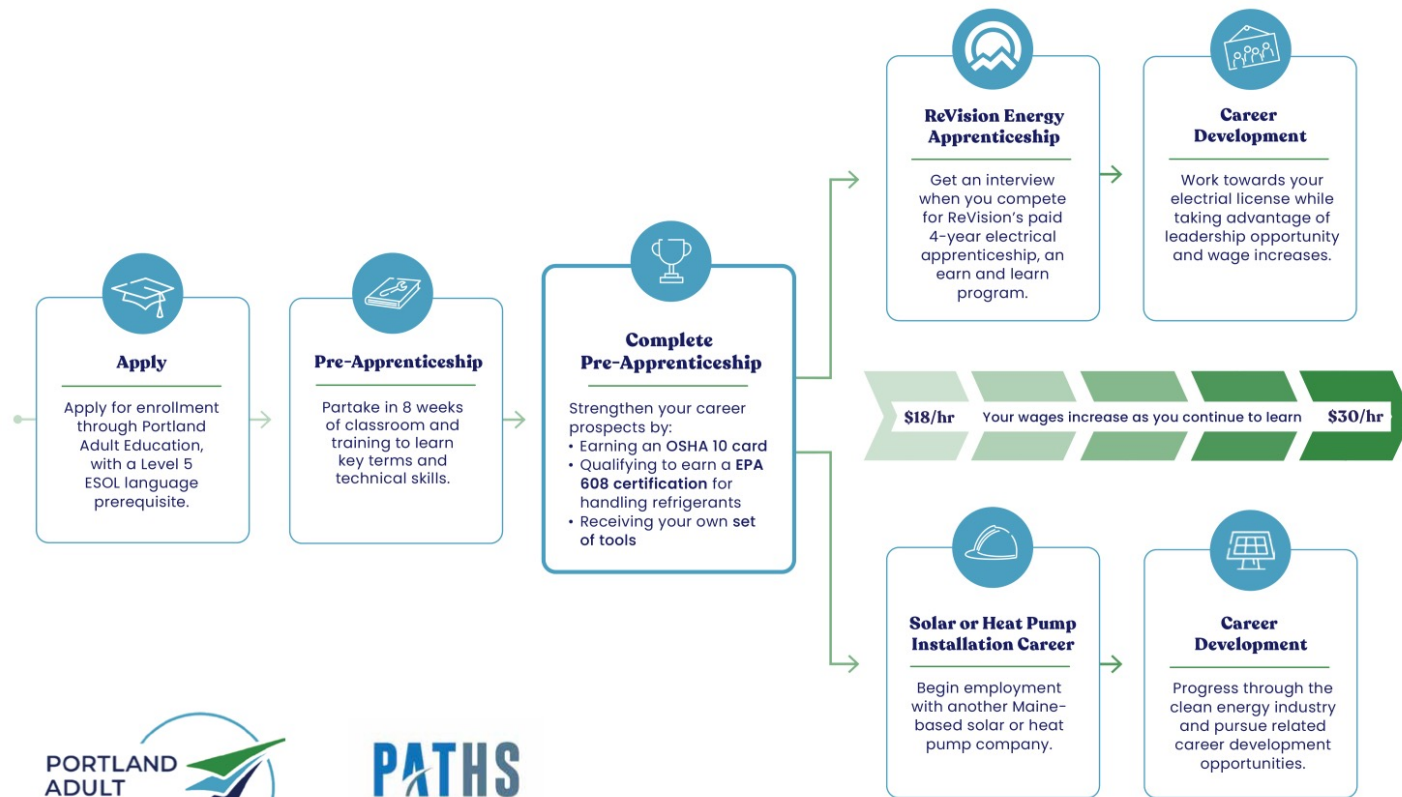
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# ReVision and Blue Ridge Power



# Renewable Energy Careers Pre-Apprenticeship Program & Career Pathway



# Thank You!

