



Building an Equitable Construction Workforce: Understanding and Increasing the Proportion of Women and People of Color in Construction

SUMMARY

In 2023 the Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) partnered with Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) and funded contractors Insight Policy Research and Urban Institute to conduct a series of analyses presented in Building an Equitable Construction Workforce: Understanding and Increasing the Proportion of Women and People of Color¹ in Construction. The analyses aimed to estimate how many women and people of color could be available for onsite construction occupations to estimate how to increase representation of women and people of color equitably through apprenticeship pathways and other promising strategies.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- According to the analysis of 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data, nationally, onsite construction occupations employ a substantially lower percentage of women Asian workers, and Black or African American workers compared to occupations with similar job requirements (3 percent compared with 12 percent for women; 1 percent compared with 3 percent for Asian workers; and 6 percent compared with 12 percent for Black or African American workers).
- The 2019 ACS data show that, nationally, onsite construction occupations employ a substantially higher percentage of Hispanic or Latino workers compared to occupations with similar job requirements (36 percent compared with 26 percent). However, the proportion of Hispanic or Latino workers who earn a low wage in onsite construction occupations (57 percent) is higher than the proportions of other demographic groups.
- The workforce of occupations with similar job requirements to onsite construction suggests that increases in the employment of women and people of color are feasible and necessary to ensure more equitable employment in construction at the national, state, and regional levels.
- Given higher proportions of women and people of color in apprenticeship programs compared with the national construction workforce for that occupation, apprenticeship may be promising a strategy for helping members of these groups access and succeed in construction jobs.
- Additional supports, like childcare services, referrals to community services, transportation assistance, housing assistance, and fairer workplace practices are

¹ In the described report, people of color refers to individuals who identify with at least one of the following race and ethnicity categories: Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.



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suggested as possible approaches to attract and retain workers from historically underrepresented groups within construction.

[SEE FULL ADMINISTRATIVE DATA RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS STUDY](#)

[SEE FULL APPRENTICESHIP EVIDENCE-BUILDING PORTFOLIO STUDY](#)

TIMEFRAME: 2023-2024

PARTNER AGENCIES: Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs;
ETA- Office of Apprenticeship

SUBMITTED BY: Insight Policy Research and Urban Institute

SPONSOR: Chief Evaluation Office

DATE PREPARED: April 2024

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