In 1976, a consortium of representatives of the building trades and contractor associations founded BIG–STEP (Building Industry Group Skilled–Skilled Trades Employment Program) in an attempt to connect and increase the number of minority, female and younger workers employed in the building trades.

In 1992, the formation of the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) was announced after the Commission on a Quality Workforce recommended the development of partnerships between business, labor and government to renew the industrial base in the Milwaukee area.

In 2000, WRTP was awarded a demonstration grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to replicate the program in other sectors, including construction.

In 2002, WRTP and BIG–STEP, both with their own highly successful histories, partnered to facilitate more effective coordination of employer-driven worker readiness to best ensure individuals preparing for employment gain the skills needed by employers, while ensuring the needs of employers are also met.

In 2005, with support from Governor Jim Doyle, the partnership established the Center of Excellence (COE) creating a clearinghouse for employers, union, job seekers and community partners.
Center of Excellence (COE) Model

- Joint Apprenticeship Committees
- High Schools and Technical Colleges
- Workforce Development Agencies
- Community and Faith-Based Organizations

WRTP/BIG STEP

Public, Private, Philanthropic Resources

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Utilities
- Emerging Sectors

Multiple Training Providers

WRTP

Building Industry Group

BIG STEP
Mission

- Improve the ability of employers and unions to recruit, retain, and develop qualified community residents for skilled trades and industries
  - Assess job-ready candidates from a wide range of referral partners
  - Prepare qualified candidates for employment and advancement opportunities
  - Place community residents into targeted trades and industries
Approach

- Provide central clearinghouse for the assessment, preparation, and placement of job ready candidates
  - Inclusive approach enables any public sector agency, educational institution, or community-based organization to refer candidates
  - Clearinghouse creates central resource for employers and unions to achieve workforce development and diversity objectives
  - DWD Task Force includes MAWIB, Job Service, Job Centers, W-2 Agencies, Urban League and other partners.
  - WRTP funds Urban League and other community-based partners that refer candidates for MMSD and DOT projects
  - Formed Urban Skilled Trades Connection (USTC) Milwaukee Public Schools
COE Programs

- BIG STEP Apprenticeship Prep
- Skilled Trades Training
- Specialized Certifications
- Employer Services
- Triada Employment Services LLC
Trainings – Construction Sector

- Asbestos Worker Supervisor Training
- Bricklayers Construction Certificate Program
- Entry Level Construction Skills
- Lead Abatement Supervisor Training
- Painters and Allied Trades Certificate
- PRIME Plumbers Training
- Roadbuilding Skills Training (M–TrANS)
- Sewer and Water Training Certificate
- Utility Construction Certificate
- Unindentured Electrical Certificate Program
Trainings – Manufacturing Sector

- Entry Level Manufacturing Skills
- Entry Level Manufacturing Skills – CNC (ELMS CNC)
- Entry Level Manufacturing Skills – WELDING (ELMS WELDING)
- Specialized Trainings designed for employers
Employer Services

- Recruitment Strategies
- Assessment Techniques
- Industry-Specific Essential Skills
- Structured OJT Training Systems
- Workplace Mentoring Networks
- Positive Attendance Practices
- Resource Development Strategies
- Industry Promotion and Awareness
- Community Partner Development
  - Triada
Certifications

- Residential Preference Program (RPP)
- Communities in Need (COIN)
- WisDot TrANS
- Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Workforce Development and Training Program (MMSD–WDTP)
- WHEDA
- Some of the construction sector trainings result in certifications such as Trans and ELCS.
**WRTP/BIG STEP**  
Placement and Wage Summary by Sector  
January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Placements</th>
<th>Average Wage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
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<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td><strong>Summary Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$14.82</strong></td>
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</table>
Contact Information

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