



## FY 2020-2021: Innovative Water Infrastructure Workforce Development Grant Program

### **Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG): Northwest Ohio Integrated Water Workforce Collaborative**



#### INTRODUCTION

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) authorized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award grants to nonprofit professional or service organizations, nonprofit labor organizations, nonprofit community colleges, institutions of higher education, or other nonprofit training and educational institutions to (1) assist in the development and use of innovative activities relating to water workforce development and career opportunities in the drinking water and wastewater utility sector, and (2) expand public awareness about drinking water and wastewater utilities and to connect individuals to careers in the drinking water and wastewater utility sector.

A total of 9 organizations were recently selected by EPA to receive grant funding under this program. EPA has developed Fact Sheets on each of these projects that includes the language from the grant submission.

To learn more about the range of activities EPA is undertaking to support our Nation's water workforce, please go to [Sustainable Water Infrastructure-Water Sector Workforce](#).



#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments will work with Owens Community College, the City of Toledo, and partners in education, public utilities, labor unions, trade organizations, and community partners to create a water and wastewater sector workforce

development collaborative that will recruit, train, and place workers in public and private sector utilities to address regional workforce needs in northwest Ohio.

The objectives of this Collaborative are to:

1. Develop a regional water and wastewater workforce collaborative to address regional workforce needs in northwest Ohio
2. Provide training and a clear career path for future water and wastewater operators in secondary education/career tech, through community college, and on to possible apprenticeships, internships, or bachelor's degree programs
3. Recruit future operators through targeted and innovative approaches
4. Place qualified program participants into internships and place operators in training positions with local utilities
5. Make the program available to other areas of Ohio and the U.S



#### MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ◇ Create a steering committee to provide direction to the objectives and establish a network of partners that will comprise of the Collaborative
- ◇ Develop tailored training curriculum and provide connections with potential employers for 5 target groups: secondary and post-secondary school students, current utility employees seeking alternate career paths, workers reentering the workforce, and veterans



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[TMACOG.ORG](http://TMACOG.ORG)



300 Dr M.L.K. Jr. Dr Ste 300,  
Toledo, OH 43604



**Kari Gerwin**  
TMACOG Project Manager  
[gerwin@tmacog.org](mailto:gerwin@tmacog.org)

**Elisabeth Schlaut**  
EPA Project Officer  
[schlautt.elisabeth@epa.gov](mailto:schlautt.elisabeth@epa.gov)



### MAJOR ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

- ◇ Develop outreach and marketing material for the 5 target groups including a website to house resources and information about local water-sector employers, a career fair, and tuition incentives for new enrollees
- ◇ Establish direct connections with water/wastewater plants to provide internships/ apprenticeships and promote these



### OUTCOMES

- ◇ Long-term collaborations to support the needs of the water utility workforce in NW Ohio
- ◇ Increased availability of water utility workforce in NW Ohio and other areas of the state
- ◇ Increased training opportunities for those interested in entering the water utility workforce
- ◇ Greater availability of faculty and water utility employees prepared to offer training to incoming water utility employees
- ◇ Enhanced skillset among existing water utility employees in NW Ohio
- ◇ Improvement in communications between water utilities and potential employees



### PARTNERS

- ◇ Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (Lead)
- ◇ Owens Community College (Lead)
- ◇ City of Toledo (Lead)
- ◇ Ohio EPA
- ◇ Ohio Water Environment Association
- ◇ RCAP
- ◇ GLCAP
- ◇ University of Toledo
- ◇ Toledo Lucas County Public Library
- ◇ Wood County Public Library,
- ◇ Lucas County Veterans Services Commission
- ◇ AFSCME
- ◇ Village of Fayette
- ◇ Lucas County Sanitary Engineer
- ◇ City of Napoleon
- ◇ City of Fremont
- ◇ Village of Swanton

