



**COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

Item No. 11a

BRIEFING ITEM

Date of Meeting June 23, 2026

DATE: June 16, 2026
TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director
FROM: Anna Pavlik, Director, Workforce Development
SUBJECT: **2025 Workforce Development Annual Report**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This briefing informs Commission of key workforce development updates and impacts from 2025 and outlines priorities for 2026 and beyond.

- **Increased hiring in 2025:** Hiring across Port sectors driven by increases at SEA via Port Jobs; construction hiring continues to lag and maritime internships slowed in final year
- **Created efficiencies and conserved Port resources:** Use private, state and federal resources to maximize benefit to our Port communities resulting in a big increase in leveraging outside resources in 2025
- **Strategic planning to take advantage of Port's unique role:** Developed maritime workforce plans in partnership with education and industry partners
- **Delivered on commitments:** Offered new services in Duwamish Valley, with taxi drivers and childcare resources at SEA to bring more services into near port communities and SEA

BACKGROUND

The Port aims to create 100,000 jobs by 2037 with our Century Agenda goal, bringing the region to **300,000 Port related jobs**. To ensure local residents can access these opportunities and employers have the talent they need to operate a thriving seaport and airport, the Workforce Development team focuses on:

- **Advocacy**
- **Convening partners**
- **Employer commitments**
- **Workforce investments**

In January 2026, the team moved into the Economic Development Division. This shift helps us:

- Better align workforce supply with employer demand
- Support the Port's shared vision and shared success strategy
- Support key initiatives like shipbuilding groundwork, decarbonization, etc

Our work ensures that as the Port grows, our communities and businesses benefit.

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2025 RESULTS

In 2025, the Port of Seattle’s workforce development investments resulted in:

- 1,733 job, internship, and apprenticeship placements (14% increase)
- 89% of the participants supported by the Port’s workforce development efforts were Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) (no change)
- 84% of the participants live in low equity areas of King County (16% increase)
- 142 employers hired program participants or provided youth career-connected learning opportunities (39% increase)

In 2025, we invested over \$3.5M in workforce development services benefiting community members looking for work, port-related businesses and incumbent workers at SEA. With collaboration across Port teams and with many community and employer partners, EDD works to expand the talent pipeline to address labor shortages in both Port of Seattle employment and maritime, aviation, and construction sectors. Building career awareness, offering workforce training, and improving job quality are all primary strategies used by the Port to meet our century agenda goals and prepare for the Port for the future. This report details the Port’s commitments, major initiatives, partnerships and progress in delivering on our mission, highlighting both successes and challenges.

Aviation Sector

In 2024 and 2025, SEA Airport set records with 52.64 and 52.7 million passengers respectively – the forecast is expected to remain stable in 2026. These record years in travel with similar forecasts for the future mean the Port’s workforce investments in aviation are more important than ever.

Airport Employment Center

Port Jobs operates the Airport Employment Center and saw a significant increase in hiring in 2025 compared to the year prior. This is an **increase of 246 jobs from 2024 (17% increase)**. Some individuals were hired into multiple positions, with a total of 1,455 people placed into 1,654 jobs in 2025. In 2025, the Airport Employment Center provided services to SEA airport companies to fill open positions and to support job seekers and SEA employees in finding employment and building skills for career advancement. Port Jobs services included:

- A “Hotlist” of job openings at SEA Airport available online and sent weekly to **851 community-based organizations and colleges** in 2025
- In-person, open interview events in partnership with SEA employers
- In-person and remote job search assistance, including support for recent refugees and immigrants
- Job readiness training, such as Security Identification Display Area (SIDA) badge training preparation to help English language learners obtain the SIDA badge
- **Paying the \$10 fee for 139 job seekers** and SEA employees in 2025 to acquire or renew a Washington State Food Worker Card, needed for food service and restaurant jobs;
- Free college classes for a range of career pathways and skill building

2025 Aviation Impact					
Airport Employment Center	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Job placements (# of jobs)	1,211	1,479	1,978	1,408	1,654
Job placements (# of people)	N/A	1,187	1,594	1,202	1,455
Average hourly wage @ placement	\$17.02	\$18.82	\$20.03	\$20.65	\$21.57
Hiring employers	80	82	93	87	112
Training enrollments (including SIDA support)	247	539	1,093	1,031	1,034
Training completions (including SIDA support)	200	573	1,012	867	844
Aviation Career Pathways: Aviation Maintenance Technician					
Training enrollments	23	18	25	25	24
Training completions	17	11	15	21	19
Aviation Career Pathways: Ground Support Equipment Mechanic					
Training enrollments				12	16
Training completions				10	15

Participant demographics: 90% BIPOC (22% Asian, 55% African/African American/Black, 9% Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, <1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 4% Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian), 7% White, and 3% Other; 58% male, 41% female, 1% LGBTQ+/Other; 86% from structurally excluded ZIP codes (low or very low on the Port’s Equity Index). Also related to participant demographics: 13% identify as speaking a North African/Middle Eastern language; while this doesn’t directly indicate a racial demographic, it could be posited that just over 13% of the BIPOC identifying individuals are from a North African or Middle Eastern origin.

Types of jobs: 50% airline operations/passenger support, 22% restaurant operations, 13% janitorial, 7% warehouse/freight, 3% retail operations, 2% security, 2% office/professional, and 1% skilled trades.

Aviation Career Pathways: Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT)

The Port of Seattle, Port Jobs, and South Seattle College have partnered since 2021 to offer an Introduction to Aviation Maintenance Technology (AMT) course at SEA. This 12-week college

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preparatory course introduces participants to the AMT profession and prepares them for the college's two-year FAA-approved AMT program. The 24 enrolled participants in 2025 were 83% BIPOC, 17% women, and were primarily airport workers in entry-level jobs such as ramp agents, fuelers, taxi/ride-share drivers, and food service workers. Interestingly, 54% (13) of the AMT students were employed at McGee Air Services at the time of entry. Students gain valuable math and study skills, financial aid support, and a \$1,000 scholarship from Port Jobs' Alaska Airlines-Airport University. Aviation maintenance technician positions are in high demand and can pay salaries over \$85,000. In 2025, the Port of Seattle entered into a 10-year Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with South Seattle College, to ensure the AMT program remains a long-term training option at SEA; the MOA will be monitored closely to ensure the program continues to garner strong results and that AMT roles remain in demand.

Aviation Career Pathways: Ground Support Equipment Training Program (GSE)

In 2025, a cohort of 15 students successfully graduated from the second offering of the Ground Support Equipment (GSE) Mechanic training program. This exciting training follows the same model as the AMT program, meaning it takes place on-site at SEA, prioritizes current SEA airport workers, and participants receive training on the GSE mechanic profession, relevant math coursework, and college-prep. Upon completion, participants are eligible to enroll in the two-year GSE mechanic program at South Seattle College. Ground Support Equipment mechanic positions offer annual salaries ranging from \$62,000 – \$80,000. The 16 enrolled participants in 2025 were 81% BIPOC and were also primarily airport workers in entry-level jobs such as ramp agents, fuelers, taxi/ride-share drivers, and food service workers.

Childcare Navigation

In Q3 of 2025, Port Jobs launched the Childcare Navigator program, funded by the Port to support SEA employees in obtaining childcare subsidies and finding childcare. Much of the work in 2025 was centered around hiring the Childcare Navigator, generating all materials and website updates, and engaging SEA worker and employers through a variety of outreach mechanisms. Port Jobs staff attended a variety of meetings and convenings to conduct outreach including: SEA Worker Transportation Fair, Alaska Air Group Employee Wellness Fair, presentations at all Airport University classes (AMT, GSE, etc.), STAMA (Station Managers meetings), SEA Employee Engagement meetings, and regular visits to the North Employee Parking Lot (NEPL). Port Jobs prioritized building relationships with local childcare providers and also became a formal "Assisting Partner" with Washington Connections, the statewide portal for individuals to apply for public benefits, including childcare subsidies. This program is currently funded through the end of 2026.

Construction Trades Sector

In 2025, the Port continued partnerships with ANEW and Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (and sub PACT pre-apprenticeship) to graduate 132 community members from construction pre-apprenticeship training. Of those trained: 62% were BIPOC and, of those placed, 66% were also BIPOC. The average hourly wage for new workers went down to \$28.89. One hundred and two

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(102) community members placed into construction apprenticeship or family jobs under the current contracts are active in apprenticeship or still working.

Job placements have remained stagnant as the commercial sector downturn continues to slow hiring across the construction industry. However, we have seen growth in placements with non-union programs and small residential contractors and the Port anticipates 1,050 workers needed through 2027. Even as apprenticeship placements decline, continued performance-based investment in pre-apprenticeship programs remains critical. These programs sustain a pipeline of trained, work-ready candidates who will be essential when construction demand rebounds. They also give underserved residents access to family-wage career pathways, industry certifications, hands-on training, and supportive services that strengthen long-term workforce participation and economic mobility. Sustained funding also protects the partnerships among contractors, unions, public agencies, and community organizations that are necessary to meet future infrastructure and capital project workforce needs.

In 2025, the Port-funded RISE Up Leadership Development pilot delivered construction-focused leadership training that increased confidence, communication skills, and readiness for advancement into positions such as foreperson, lead worker, general foreperson, superintendent, project engineer, and project manager. Of the ten participants enrolled, four completed all program requirements, with others continuing toward completion through ongoing support and technical assistance. The program demonstrated strong value in culturally responsive curriculum, mentorship, and technical skill development, particularly for women and BIPOC workers navigating advancement barriers in the construction industry. However, placement into leadership roles was limited due to reduced construction activity, highlighting the need for stronger employer integration, structured mentorship, rotational leadership assignments, job-shadowing opportunities, stretch assignments leading small crews or project phases, and clearer promotion pathways that support long-term advancement into management roles.

Construction Results

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Enrolled	274	209	157	163	159
Training completions	180	187	138	144	132
Placements (apprenticeships, trades-related jobs)	101	125	71	72	56
Hiring employers	42	63	14	10	18
Hourly wage @ placement	\$25.61	\$23.14	\$32.37	\$32.67	\$28.89

Numbers include those from construction worker outreach, training, and retention jointly funded by the Port of Seattle and the City of Seattle.

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Participant demographics: 81% BIPOC (4% Asian, 50% Black/African American, 15% Hispanic/Latino, 2% Native American/Alaskan Native, 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 9% Multi-Race), 18% White, 1% Not reported; 68% men, 30% women; 2% Non-binary 63% from structurally excluded ZIP codes.

Types of jobs: Electricians, Installers/helpers, Plumbers, Ironworkers, HVAC technicians, Painters, Laborers, Carpenters.

Maritime Sector

The Youth Maritime Career Launch (YMCL) program served as a foundational pilot that provided key insights for connecting young adults to maritime careers, largely through paid internships, industry-aligned training and employer partnerships. Across the lifespan of the program, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle and Washington Maritime Blue enrolled 100 participants and successfully placed 65 participants into internships across more than 20 maritime employers. The hosting employers provided work experience in shipyards, recreational boating facilities, and ferries. A diverse group of participants (77% BIPOC, 20% women, 20% women, 6% non-binary) earned entry-level credentials including Basic Safety Training, Transportation Worker Identification Credentials (TWIC), and Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC). Youth (age 18-24) were placed in internships across a range of positions: entry-level deckhand, structural fitter and welder helper, general laborer, dockmaster, electrical intern, wiper intern and maritime security.

Building on these outcomes, the Port is shifting its maritime workforce strategy beyond youth internships toward a broader, industry aligned workforce development model. In Sept 2025, Commission approved Phase 1 of the strategy and, in 2026, the Maritime Career Launch program will focus on shoreside technical training, direct job placement, long-term job retention for adults in near-port communities. Phase 1 partnership is underway, with the Workforce Development Council (WDC) leading the equitable outreach and recruitment using state and federally funded community-based organizations to enroll near-port community participants and provide wraparound supports to reduce barriers to training & employment. Industry-driven training is being offered by South Seattle College's Shipyard Welding Certificate Program at the Harbor Island Training Center. Phase 1 also includes intentional employer engagement and job placement efforts led by the Maritime Workforce Liaison will strengthen partnerships with maritime employers to support direct hiring, improve job matching accuracy and increase retention in entry-level maritime shipyard roles.

Maritime High School

Enrollment and Demographics

- **121 students enrolled** for 2025–26 (down from 129 in 2024–25)
- **Diversity increased**, including:
 - **+4%** female-identifying students
 - **+5%** Latino students
- **49% of students identify as BIPOC.**
- **Gender identity distribution:** 63% male, 32% female, 5% non-binary.

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- Nearly **half of the 9th-grade cohort identifies as female**, indicating a more balanced pipeline.

The school's first graduating class also showed promising outcomes, more than half enrolled directly in college, including Cal Poly Maritime Academy, University of Washington and Western Washington. Several students also entered the maritime workforce, including two graduates hired by Washington State Ferries and Vane Brothers. Students also gained hands-on industry exposure through Washington State Ferries' "Classroom on the Water," where 12th grade Vessel Operations students spend six days aboard vessels learning about wheelhouse operations, engine room functions and emergency response protocols. This partnership continues to strengthen the school's hands-on, career-connected learning model.

Core Plus Maritime

Port funding in 2025 enabled Core Plus Maritime to add merchant marine STCW certifications to its STEM-aligned marine manufacturing program, introduced alongside new student work assembling Submersible Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) in partnership with the U.S. Navy STEM Team and the U.S. Navy Undersea Warfare Center. Core Plus gathered input from teachers and industry that recommended expansion into exploratory ROV based STEM learning in grades 6–10, preparatory manufacturing and STEM coursework in grades 11–12, culminating in a short-term Basic Safety Training (BST) capstone that would allow graduates to earn U.S. Coast Guard Ordinary Seafarer endorsements. Industry response to the STCW integration has been positive and planning with the Puget Sound Educational Service District is underway in 2026.

WABS After School Program

Port of Seattle sponsored the development of *Carrying Cargo* curriculum by Washington Alliance for Better Schools (WABS). The curriculum is part of the STEM4GOOD free after school programming for 3rd through 8th graders and served approximately 850 students across 34 after school programs across the state. Students learned about port related careers and the concept of buoyancy by floating a ship in a bottle.

Green Jobs

Most green jobs are not new roles—they are existing jobs in construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services. In 2025, the Port strengthened its green jobs strategy by implementing the Duwamish Valley Career Navigation program and leveraging other available green job training like JumpStart. The Duwamish Valley Career Navigation program replaced the green jobs program and more directly connects Duwamish Valley members to Port career opportunities. TRAC Associates, serving as the career navigation specialist, conducted targeted outreach across community organizations, libraries, health centers, pre-apprenticeship programs, and food distribution sites in South Park while also engaging port related employers such as the Duwamish Shipyard, Northwest Solar, Sound Transit, and others. In 2025, 16 participants were enrolled and 13 began receiving career navigation services. As part of the

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Duwamish Valley Community Engagement Plan, training completions and job placements will increase as services mature. Port-funded pre-apprenticeship programs also trained and placed 22 community members into clean energy apprenticeships focused on the construction, installation, maintenance, and operation of renewable energy systems. This year, 2026, is being spent mapping out how seaport jobs and education will likely change as ports transition to clean energy.

MOVING FORWARD

To create transformational change and invest in career development, not just finding people jobs, EDD recommends that the Port continue:

- **Aligning investments with industry needs:** Investments need to be embedded in regional strategies with meaningful employer buy-in.
- **Focus on systems, not stand-alone programs:** Improving referral pathways between community partners, training providers and employers so jobseekers can move easily from outreach and career coaching into training, job placement and long-term support.
- **Build capacity** to prepare for and respond to labor market shifts due to AI, federal priorities (e.g. shipbuilding, short-term training certificates, etc).
- **Leveraging the Port’s relationships** with tenants, contractors, and port-related employers to create more tangible opportunities for jobseekers, including site visits, career exposure and work-based learning.
- **Strengthening data collection and reporting:** Collecting more program data, workforce demand analysis and partner feedback to improve program design and ensure investments are leading to equitable access and career advancement for near-port communities while meeting port related industry needs.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING

- (1) Presentation Slides

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

- (1) September 2025- The Commission approved the Maritime Career Launch Program
- (2) September 2025 – The Commission extended the Aviation Security Training Program
- (3) May 2025 – The Commission approved the Aviation Security Training Program
- (4) March 2025 – The Commission adopted the Duwamish Valley Career Navigator Program
- (5) October 2024 – The Commission extended the Youth Maritime Career Launch Program
- (6) July 2024 - The Commission was briefed on the 2023 WFD Annual Report
- (7) May 2024 – The Commission approved the Interlocal Agreement with Highline Public Schools, Maritime High School