



Washington Jobs Initiative Q2 & Q3 2025 Update

December 2025

Highlights

Despite ongoing economic challenges, the Washington Jobs Initiative (WJI) saw a significant increase in all outcomes in Q2 (April – June) and Q3 (July – September) of 2025. These show the improved capacity of sectoral training-to-employment pipelines and data collection processes. WJI is on track to meet overall targets by the end of the grant in September 2026.

Table 1. WJI Cumulative Outcomes as of Q2 (April – June) and Q3 (July – September) 2025 show significant increases over the start of the year (Q1, January – March 2025).

	Targets	Q1 2025 Outcomes*	Q1 2025 % Complete	Q2 2025 Outcomes	Q2 2025 % Complete	Q3 2025 Outcomes	Q3 2025 % Complete
Enrollments	5,000	3,587	72%	4,184	84%	4,675	94%
Completions	3,150	1,604	51%	2,099	67%	2,659	84%
Placements	3,150	1,181	37%	1,639	52%	2,028	64%

WJI Program Focuses on No-Cost Extension

In Q2 and Q3 2025, the WJI program focused on updating projections, strategic plans, and contracts as part of its No-Cost Extension (NCE) through September 30, 2026. WSAC worked with sub-awardees—Washington Employment Security Department and Washington STEM—to help sectoral partnerships identify:

- Which programs give the best return on investment?
- What challenges do they face?
- What strategic changes might help?

For the rest of the grant period, the partnerships will focus on engaging with employers to ensure current trainees are placed in good jobs. They will also offer limited new enrollments in short-term programs that can lead to job placements. All sectoral partnerships will continue under the NCE except for one—Machinists Institute’s approach relied heavily on pre-apprenticeships, which were unlikely to result in unique placements within the grant timeframe.

* Outcomes data throughout this document are cumulative.

Participants Find New Career Opportunities with WJI Support

WJI’s goal is to help participants find new career opportunities. WJI offers participants a pathway to new family-sustaining jobs through support services such as career navigation and wrap-around support, as well as hands-on training programs focused on work-based learning.

This quarter, we heard from Bryan, one of the participants in Pierce Spokane Construction WORKS. Bryan expressed his gratitude for the support offered through WJI.



Photo of Bryan, a WJI construction apprentice

When Bryan came into WorkSource Spokane, he knew he needed to make a career change. He was looking for a position that would support his family. On his career navigator’s advice, he attended and completed the *Inland Northwest Associated General Contractors’ Head Start to the Construction Trades Pre-Apprenticeship* training program. Bryan received a gas card and work clothes to help with on-the-job training. He expressed his gratitude for WJI and his career navigator by saying, “Thank you for your due diligence and seeing the littlest details. It is very appreciated.” Bryan reported making \$38/hour as a registered apprentice laborer for Leone & Keeble.

Sectors Address Challenges with Strategic Shifts

In Q2 and Q3 2025, sectors faced an unsteady economy and job market. Focus shifted to increasing employer engagement to create more openings for participants.

Advanced Manufacturing and Aerospace

Enrollments and completions are very strong for the Advanced Manufacturing and Aerospace sector; however, placements lag behind due to economic uncertainty and hiring slowdowns.

Table 2. Advanced Manufacturing and Aerospace Outcomes as of September 2025.

	Targets	Outcomes	% Complete
Enrollments	730	937	128%
Completions	676	695	103%
Placements	655	278	42%

Highlights: The Advanced Manufacturing and Aerospace sector has continued its focus on creating career pathways for underrepresented groups. This includes:

- Tribal outreach and relationship-building.
- Onboarding new training agents.

- Supporting participants with job opportunities through individualized matching, coordinated referrals, and close follow-up with candidates and hiring managers.

Challenges and Strategic Shifts: An unsteady economy and changes in global trade policy have impacted hiring. Employers are concerned about new and shifting tariffs, especially on steel, aluminum, and imported components. Sectoral partnerships are working closely with employers to create training pathways that can flex with market conditions.

Clean Technology and Energy

The Clean Technology and Energy sectoral partnership is relatively new. The program is ramping up employer engagement and growing program cohorts to address bottlenecks.

Table 3. Clean Technology and Energy Outcomes as of September 2025.

	Targets	Outcomes	% Complete
Enrollments	89	65	73%
Completions	79	42	54%
Placements	80	29	36%

Highlights: The Clean Technology and Energy sector secured two new grants (CCW Program Builder Grant and WA Commerce Green Jobs & Infrastructure Grant) to expand program location, capacity, and employer engagement. They have begun identifying and contracting with lead workforce organizations in King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties to expand decarbonization projects.

Challenges and Strategic Shifts: Small cohort sizes have limited the Clean Technology and Energy workforce pipeline. Moving forward, they are increasing cohort sizes and leading direct-hire on-the-job training (OJT) models. Seven new employer partners were brought on board to provide work-based learning opportunities for participants. They will also begin building out new career tracks in project management, sustainability, and customer service.

Construction

Despite economic uncertainty, the Construction workforce pipeline is strong, especially due to investment in Registered Apprenticeships where employment is tied to program enrollment. The Construction sector has achieved all enrollment, completion, and placement targets for the original WJI grant. Targets will be increased for the NCE through September 2026.

Table 4. Construction Outcomes as of September 2025.

	Targets	Outcomes	% Complete
Enrollments	831	1,048	126%
Completions	220	223	101%
Placements	735	825	112%

Highlights: The Construction sectoral partnerships are focusing heavily on employer engagement. For example, they hosted a Construction Industry Roundtable discussion on mental health and the development of trauma-informed training and mentorship models. They also held a tool drive event where local employers provided new or gently used tools for entry-level construction workers and apprentices.

Challenges and Strategic Shifts: Economic uncertainty, rising material costs, shifting regulatory environments, fluctuations in interest rates, and potential delays in infrastructure funding are all impacting hiring. Sectoral partnerships are focusing on continued employer engagement and participant support during the slower hiring season.

Despite these challenges, the support provided by WJI is showing a significant impact, with participants in the Construct a Career sectoral partnership maintaining a 91 percent registered apprenticeship retention rate, compared to 60 percent retention statewide.

Healthcare

The Healthcare sector is working to expand its workforce pipeline by supporting participants facing barriers and collaborating with employers to increase employment opportunities.

Table 5. Healthcare Outcomes as of September 2025.

	Targets	Outcomes	% Complete
Enrollments	1,358	1,006	74%
Completions	927	519	56%
Placements	757	477	63%

Highlights: The Healthcare sectoral partnerships are advancing pathways into high-demand healthcare careers for populations facing greater barriers to entry. This includes outreach workshops on healthcare careers, expanding access to English Language Learner training programs and services, and supporting both participants and employers to reduce language-related barriers to employment and retention.

Challenges and Strategic Shifts: Ongoing economic uncertainty, due to changes in federal regulations and cuts to state-funded programs, is limiting both training and placement opportunities. In addition, licensing bottlenecks continue to cause delays in hiring participants. In response, the Healthcare sectoral

partnerships are providing wraparound support to participants during licensure delays. They are also continuing to strengthen employer relationships and expand placement opportunities.

Information Technology and Cybersecurity

The Information Technology and Cybersecurity sector is working to address significant reductions in the job market due to the impact of AI by increasing employer engagement and participant supports.

Table 6. Information Technology and Cybersecurity Outcomes as of September 2025.

	Targets	Outcomes	% Complete
Enrollments	1971	1619	82%
Completions	1617	1180	73%
Placements	1000	419	42%

Highlights: The Information Technology and Cybersecurity sector is focusing heavily on employer engagement. This includes 1:1 outreach to chambers of commerce and employers, employer focus groups to explore talent needs and partnership, and industry committee meetings and workshops focusing on AI competencies and workforce strategies.

Challenges and Strategic Shifts: The shrinking junior developer job market is impacting hiring, as AI tools increasingly replace these positions. The sectoral partnership is focusing on refining its model to fully support its training providers and candidates by providing skills-based job matching.

About the Washington Student Achievement Council

The Washington Student Achievement Council is committed to increasing educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. The Council has three main functions:

- Lead statewide strategic planning to increase educational attainment.
- Administer programs that help people access and pay for college.
- Advocate for the economic, social, and civic benefits of higher education.

The Council has ten members. Four members represent each of Washington's major education sectors: four-year public baccalaureates, four-year private colleges, public community and technical colleges, and K-12 public schools. Six are citizen members, including two current students (one graduate student and one undergraduate student).

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