



COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION

Mass Cultural Council

January 2026

Intro to Commonwealth Corporation

Building workforce
skills for a
Massachusetts
strong economy.

- Quasi-public agency established in 1996
- Under the umbrella of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD)
- Enhances workforce training in Massachusetts on behalf of the state legislature and administration
- Supports all sectors, and particularly those with acute labor shortages such as healthcare, manufacturing, and the trades
- Focused on critical populations (e.g., un/under-employed adults, youth, returning citizens, young adults with disabilities)
- Play several key roles:
 - Administration of workforce training grants
 - Technical assistance provider and convener to strengthen system and provider capacity
 - Collect and report statewide workforce training data



“FAST FACTS” ABOUT COMMCORP’S PORTFOLIO

1

In FY25, CommCorp awarded **\$100M+ in grants**, reaching more than **30K participants** across its grant-making programs

2

All of CommCorp’s grant-making programs have achieved positive **completion¹ rates above 75%** and **credential² rates above 68%** in recent years

3

Geographically, CommCorp’s programs reach individuals and employers in every corner of Massachusetts, **in proportion to the state’s overall employer pool**

4

Grant programs **serve all industries based on need in MA**; recent focus areas have included manufacturing, construction, healthcare, and hospitality/accommodation

5

CommCorp places a unique focus on **underserved individuals**, serving a higher proportion of low-income and unemployed individuals and individuals of color

1. Completion means an enrolled individual successfully graduated from the program

2. Credentials include certifications, certificates, licenses, and other industry-recognized verifications of an individual’s qualifications. Credentials are typically issued by a third party. Examples of credentials obtained by CommCorp programs include AWS 1G for welding, EPA608 for HVAC, and the CompTIA A+ certification.

WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS TRUST FUND

- Funds projects in a wide range of sectors (healthcare, financial services, transportation, and many others) and pivots to address critical state priorities (e.g. ESOL)
- Funds partnerships between employers, training providers, and other organizations to create a "pipeline" of workers
- Trains unemployed and underemployed adults
- **Eligibility:** Community-based organizations, Employers, Employer associations, Higher education institutions, Labor organizations, MassHire Workforce Boards, Nonprofit service providers, MassHire Career Centers, For profit organizations, Vocational education institutions (excluding Chapter 74 schools for manufacturing and construction/skilled trades pathways)
- Awards can be up to \$500,000 per Donnelly (implementation) grant
- **Funding Opportunities:** RFP open now



200 employers and ~3k participants enrolled in active grants

IMPACT CHANGING CAREERS, CHANGING LIVES

Lucileia Esquerdo worked for years as a housekeeper but the exposure to harsh chemicals left her with allergies, and she longed for a career change.

She decided to enroll in a Nursing Assistant / Home Health Aide Training, delivered by Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities has offered this program for more than 25 years, but in the past, tuition was \$1,000. With funding from WCTF, they are now able to offer this course for free with added supports for students.

Catholic Charities has **hired an intake coordinator and a career coach, adapting to meet the requirements of the industry.**

Esquerdo now works at the Neville Center at Fresh Pond, Cambridge.



“Being able to offer this training free is a game changer and allows us to change the lives of hundreds of individuals.” - Antonio De Sousa Lobo, Director of Workforce Development, Catholic Charities

WORKFORCE TRAINING FUND PROGRAM

- Signature workforce offering for small to medium-sized businesses that helps support business productivity and competitiveness
- Provides rapid resources to fund training for current employees in a range of skills, such as quality assurance, sales and customer service, project management, English for Speakers of Other Languages, and much more
- Fund Express grants of up to \$15,000 each for businesses with up to 100 employees, and General Program grants of up to \$125,000 each for businesses of any size
- **Eligibility:** Massachusetts employers that use the contributory method to finance Unemployment Insurance are eligible, which includes all for profit and some nonprofit employers
- Training providers play a critical role in providing training through both the Express and General Program grants
- **Funding Opportunities:** Applications open now



**~28k incumbent and newly hired workers
trained across 1.6K small businesses**

IMPACT

STAYING COMPETITIVE AFTER A CENTURY

Peter Coppez, Owner and President of M.L. Schmitt, an electrical contractor serving Western Massachusetts for a century, saw significant improvements to his company after receiving funding from the Workforce Training Fund Program.

This funding allowed him to partner with ICG Industrialized Construction to provide Lean Fundamentals Training to his employees focused on improving project management, streamlining material movement, and enhancing safety protocols.

The training has improved team communication, efficiency, and productivity. **Since the start of the grant in FY24, M.L. Schmitt has increased its full-time workforce from 52 to 123 employees.**



“We are trying to stay relevant and efficient in everything we do. This grant has enabled us to retrain our workforce, making us more competitive in a fast-paced industry.” - Peter Coppez, Owner and President of M.L. Schmitt

CAREER TECHNICAL INITIATIVE

- Funds MA Chp. 74 vocational technical high schools
- Funds training "after dark" to address the needs of adult jobseekers
- Trains unemployed and underemployed adults
- Focused on manufacturing, construction, and skilled trades
- Partnerships with employers and MassHire Career Centers or third-party providers
- **Eligibility:** DESE approved Chapter 74 vocational programs aligned to target occupations
- Anticipated size of an individual award is \$160,000 - \$2M
- **Funding Opportunities:** Expect to release RFP January 2026



**1.5k un/underemployed adults
enrolled in grants**

IMPACT

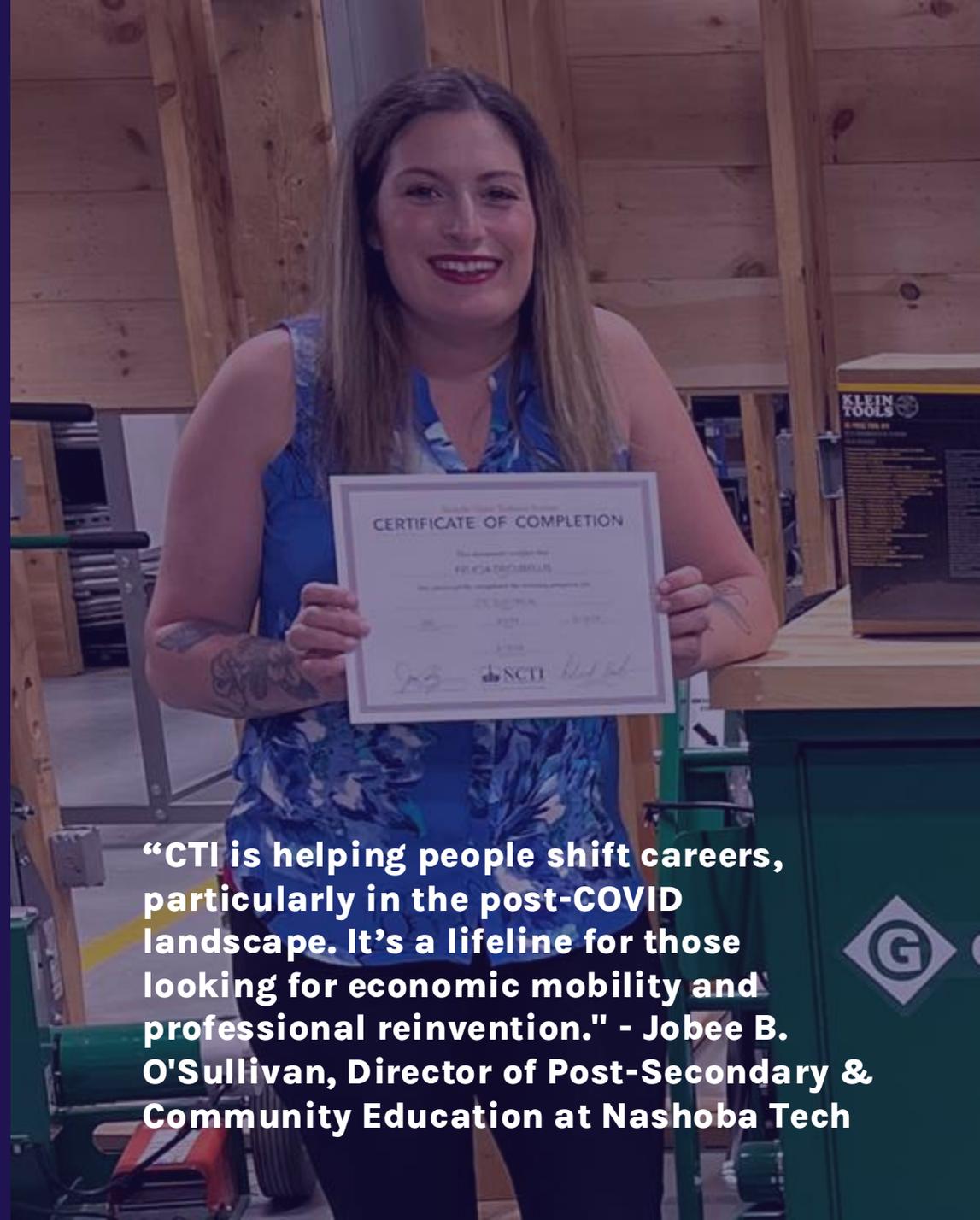
REWIRING AND REINVENTING

Felicia, a former bartender, was searching for stability and better opportunities when she decided to enroll in the CTI Electrical Program at Nashoba.

The program, which combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills, allowed Felicia to build a network and secure a full-time position at Granite City Electric just after completing the program.

The CTI Electrical Program at Nashoba, which began in 2023, **has gained significant momentum, drawn increased interest, and even created a waitlist for future classes.**

CTI programs build a skilled workforce that, in turn, strengthens local economies and businesses.



“CTI is helping people shift careers, particularly in the post-COVID landscape. It’s a lifeline for those looking for economic mobility and professional reinvention.” - Jobee B. O’Sullivan, Director of Post-Secondary & Community Education at Nashoba Tech

AVAILABLE FUNDING

- Find information on live Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and other funding opportunities by:
 - Visiting our website commcorp.org and going to the "Available Funding" page
 - Following us on social media to see RFP release announcements
 -  [/Commonwealth Corporation](#)
 -  [@CommonwealthCorporation](#)
 - Subscribing to our email newsletter and/or our LinkedIn newsletter for available funding updates



UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES/RFPS

PROGRAM NAME	RELEASE DATE
Workforce Training Fund Program	Applications Open Now
Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund	RFP Open Now
CTI Round 11	Expected January 2026



SUBMIT ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO INFO@COMMCORP.ORG



THANKS!

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