



City of Seattle

Priority Hire

Updated May 2022



Priority Hire

Undoing racism through economic equity

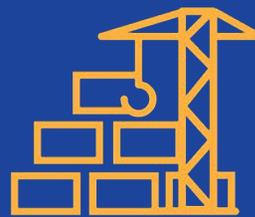
The City of Seattle's Priority Hire program puts people living in economically distressed communities to work on the City's construction projects. By focusing on the entire worker development process – from pre-training to construction careers – Priority Hire creates economic opportunities and invests tax dollars back into the city's communities. The program works by:



Recruiting
diverse workers



Training workers



Helping workers
get hired



Giving workers
ongoing support

Most job openings in Washington through — particularly those with living wages and upward growth — will require postsecondary education. Priority Hire offers a pathway to these jobs for those living in economically distressed communities, people of color and women: construction apprenticeship.

Starting construction apprenticeships pay \$18 – \$34 an hour	Entry-level healthcare jobs pay \$12 – \$18 an hour	Entry-level information technology jobs pay \$13 – \$21 an hour
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Sources: Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, 2018; City of Seattle, 2020.

The City works closely with stakeholders, including community groups, construction labor unions, contractors, training providers and other regional partners to sustain a successful Priority Hire program.

For more information on Priority Hire, go to

www.seattle.gov/priorityhire

Achieving Priority Hire Goals

The City began Priority Hire with a pilot on the Elliott Bay Seawall Project in late 2013. Through 2021, Priority Hire had 45 active or completed projects with 7.2 million combined hours.

Since late 2013, workers living in economically distressed communities earned

\$77.8 million

This is \$36.7 million more in wages than before Priority Hire.

Since 2016, the City invested

\$4.8 million

in recruitment, training and support services

for workers living in economically distressed ZIP codes, women and people of color

299 Priority Hire individuals recruited and placed into construction by community organizations

718 Trained pre-apprentices and Priority Hire clients placed in construction

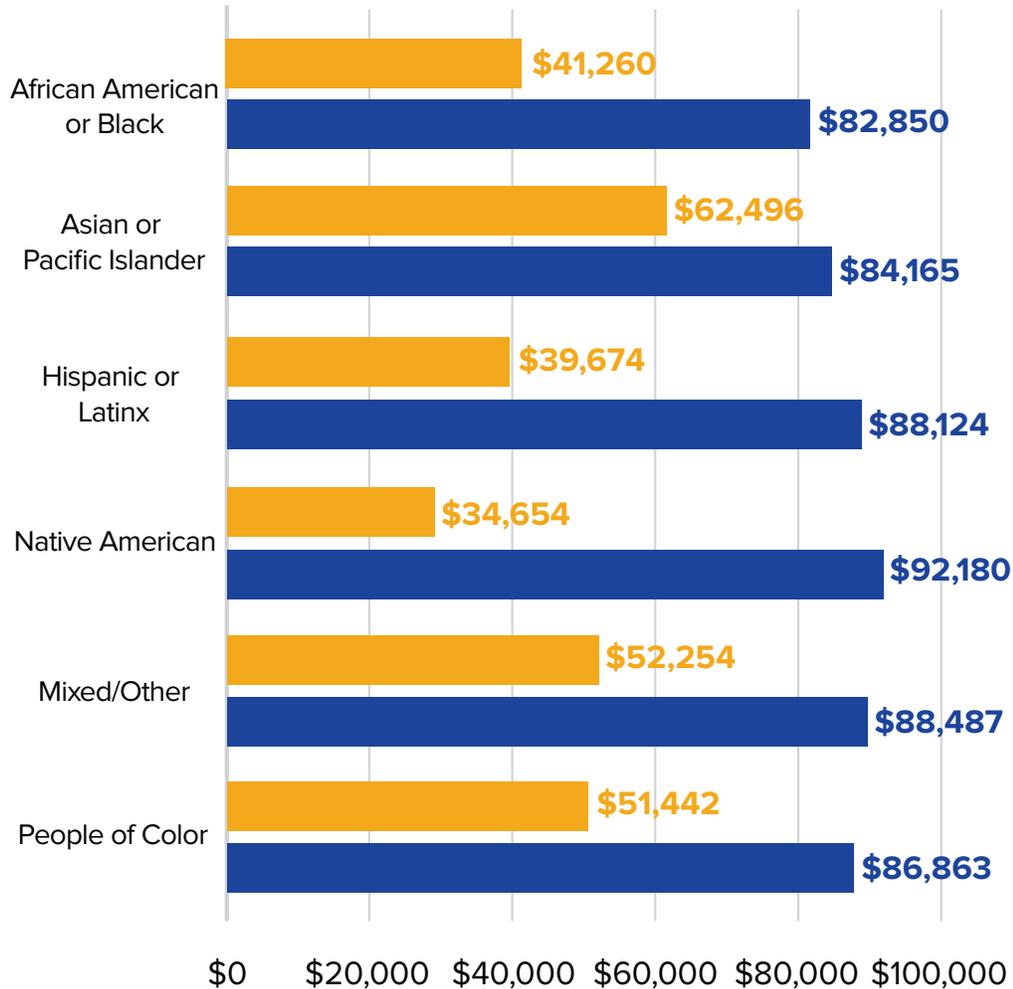
432 Priority Hire individuals received targeted retention support

190 Individuals obtained or regained their driver's licenses

1,597 Acceptable Work Site trainings to prevent bullying, hazing and harrassment

Closing the wage gap

Priority Hire helps offset wage gaps among workers of color and women. These workers earn more working on Priority Hire projects than the regional average income for people of color and women.



AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME IN SEATTLE METROPOLITAN REGION (2018)

ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME ON PRIORITY HIRE PROJECTS (2021)

Sources: National Equity Atlas, Advancing Equity in Seattle, 2021; City of Seattle, 2022. The estimated average income on Priority Hire projects is based on 2021 wages divided by hours, multiplied by the 1,800 hours a construction worker is likely to perform in a year.



Priority Hire in Action



Pati

Pati is an ANEW pre-apprenticeship graduate who worked as a sheet metal apprentice and trimble operator for Hermanson on Climate Pledge Arena. Having grown up in Seattle, Pati was excited to work on Climate Pledge Arena. From the first day on the project, she felt Mortenson's (the prime contractor) focus on safety and worker appreciation. She loved the experience — especially seeing many other women and people of color on the project; usually, she's the only one. Pati faced many challenges before she started her apprenticeship, but her construction career has allowed her to find her true self, buy her first home and provide a good life for her young son.



Na'Quelle

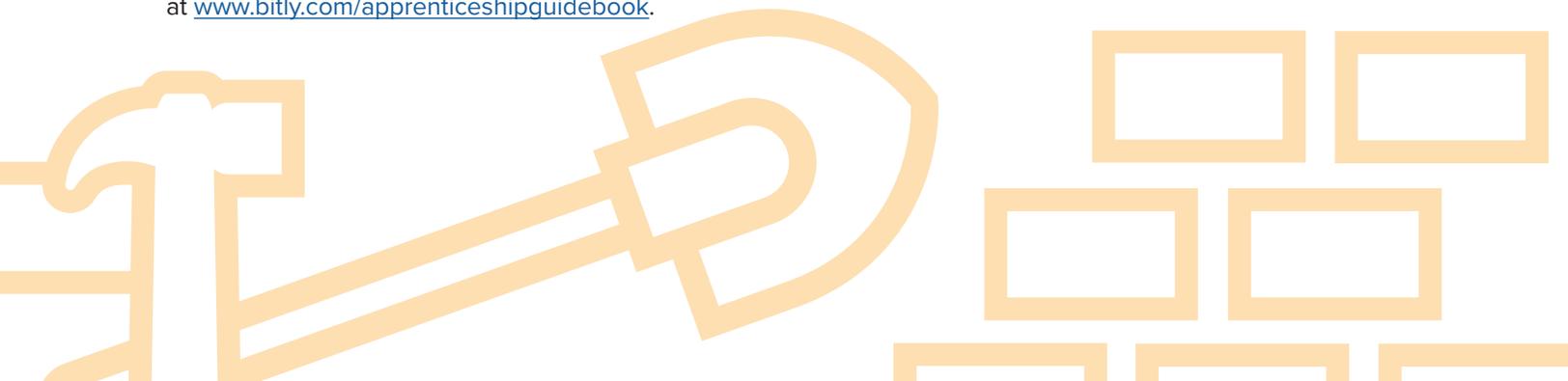
Long before she was a successful electrician's apprentice, Na'Quelle was a high school girl who liked books, sports, math and problem-solving. She loved physics class and started thinking about becoming an engineer. On the way there, she wanted to be a truck driver or heavy equipment operator, and build stuff since she loves physical work. After college, she moved to Seattle, working many different jobs before she learned about apprenticeship. She applied to three different programs and got into the Electrician's apprenticeship! She's worked on several Priority Hire projects on the waterfront. Her life is much more stable now. But the biggest difference from her past jobs is the bond between electricians. It makes her feel so welcome in the industry.



Giovanni

Giovanni is a carpenter's apprentice who has worked on the Seattle Waterfront project. He loved to build things growing up, but at first didn't consider carpentry for a career — his family and teachers always told him college was the way to go. But after running into financial problems, he reconsidered, and introduced the idea of carpentry to his parents. He started the apprenticeship in the fall of 2020. His journey workers and superintendent love his work ethic and developing skill set. He loves working outside in the open air, even in bad weather. He earns more money than his family thought possible, and can plan for the future.

For more information on starting a construction career, check out the Construction Apprenticeship Guidebook at www.bitly.com/apprenticeshipguidebook.





Seattle

www.seattle.gov/priorityhire