



## EFFICIENCY FOR ALL

Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Our Clean Energy Transition and Climate Action Plans.

Workforce Development. Community Engagement.

Training and Education for Climate Advocacy = Knowledge is Power.

# Efficiency For All M=POWER Workforce Development 2022 Outcomes Report



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Efficiency For All (EFA) - "Efficiency is Efficient" ~ Creating and Advocating for Responsible Reliable Resilient Reachable Energy Policy.

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# About Efficiency For All



Leticia Colon de Mejias



Lorenzo Wyatt

Efficiency For All (EFA) is a Connecticut-based nonprofit founded by a concerned group of minority energy workers and community environmental justice advocates to address the lack of minority representation and access to information on the State of CT's energy plans and resources in our known vulnerable communities.

As a result of the [CT 2017 C&LM raid](#), EFA filed to attain its nonprofit status. EFA is operated by Connecticut-

based minority and veteran board members, who care deeply about the future of our nation's environment and energy nexus. EFA works collaboratively to increase human opportunities to live free of environmental and energy harms, to have the chance to prosper, the opportunity to access the American dream of economic prosperity, and the chance to develop long-term individual and collective generational wealth.

***EFA actively advocates for the stabilization, expansion, and implementation of energy and environmental plans and practices that are steeped in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in thought and practices, procedures which impact and direct our local and national Clean Energy planning and programs.***

EFA engages the community directly on the importance of energy equity, energy environmental nexuses, energy resilience, and health connections to empower them through Energy Efficiency and sustainability strategies. Our equity and environmental justice focus aims to protect human health by improving the environment, providing local jobs, increasing positive economic outcomes, and reducing short-term and long-term energy costs while stabilizing the energy grid and improving the housing stock. We provide information, training, and education. We connect the communities we serve by engaging them in Clean Energy careers and providing access to Clean Energy resources and information. Our holistic approach has been called upon by the National Department of Energy, the United States Congress, the National Building Performance Association (BPA,) and National Environmental Justice Advocacy Committee (NEJAC,) and the Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS). Our programs and outcomes support resilience, responsibility, reliability and renewable energy approaches. EFA supports environmental justice-focused planning and Clean Energy policy for all Amer-I-Cans.



# Executive Summary



Connecticut and our nation as a whole are facing a lack of qualified workers for the growing Clean Energy industry. ***“Energy Efficiency career paths are Clean Energy career paths.”*** These include entry-level building science auditors, energy auditors, support technicians, insulation installers, insulation support techs, office administrators, window installers, electricians, heat pump installers, ALM/ mold remediation, customer service representatives, office billers and community educators to name a few of the growing accessible career opportunities in Connecticut today.

## ***Energy Efficiency Career Paths are Clean Energy Career Paths.***

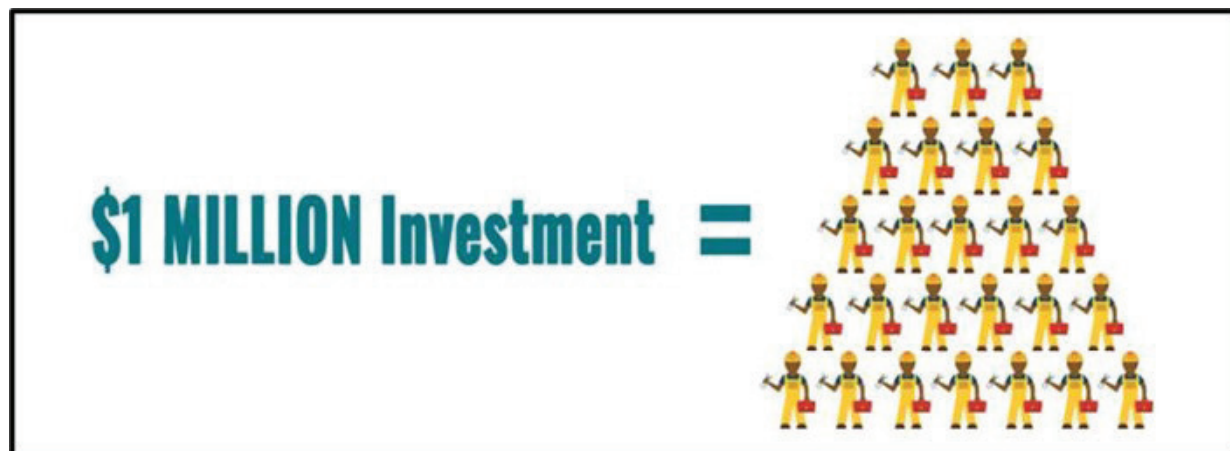
The lack of certified workers with hands-on experience has been exacerbated by a need to quickly meet the expanded federal and local investments in our Clean Energy and infrastructure upgrades. Additionally, we must work intentionally to develop supports which connect Connecticut residents located in historic environmental justice communities to the benefits of our Clean Energy transition. Implementing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lenses are critical steps in meeting new

state and federal climate and energy goals. The Pandemic resulted in over a 30% loss of workers, widening the already growing gap in our workforce. The opportunities to close the equity gaps are prime and accessible. This work will be supported by the landmark Inflation Reduction Act.

**EFFICIENCY IS EFFICIENT =  
RESPONSIBLE + RELIABLE +  
DIRECTLY SUPPORTS OUR MOST  
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND OUR  
ENERGY GRID STABILITY**

Energy Efficiency is still the most cost-effective way to lower energy expenses and lower energy-related pollution while closing the energy afford ability gap and addressing the connections between health and housing. Energy Efficiency is the only win-win option for energy and climate planning and is significant to ensuring a safe, affordable clean future for all Americans.

# Energy Efficiency Jobs are Clean Energy Jobs



*M=POWER students quickly become stable contributing members of society, ending cycles of generational poverty.*

Our EFA M=POWER workforce programs prepare participants to quickly move beyond entry level Energy Efficiency roles. Our training seeks to diversify who receives the benefits of long-term career growth opportunities. We help minorities pave paths that are flexible but stable to leverage what they know in combination with their newly gained Clean Energy skills. M=POWER graduates earn a minimum of \$17 an hour after only 6 weeks of training. After six months of job placement, participants earned an average of \$20 an hour. After one year of employment, participants earned an average of \$22 an hour.

## Looking Ahead, Long Lasting Success

Surveyed Energy Efficiency contractor partners noted that they personally began their work as entry-level technicians during the 2009 ARRA movement. These Clean Energy Efficiency workers and small business owners have been working in Clean Energy for over 10 years. All reported that they were earning between \$60k and \$100k annually. Many had also attained long lasting professional benefits such as 401K matching, paid time off, healthcare, and employment in leadership roles or at the public utilities.

**THE ENERGY WE DON'T WASTE  
IS THE CHEAPEST AND  
CLEANEST SOURCE OF ENERGY  
FOR ALL PEOPLE**

# The Problem: Closing the Equity Gap

Many job seekers are unaware of the growing Clean Energy industries including Energy Efficiency retrofitting. While others lack the proper skill sets needed to apply for growing Clean Energy career paths. These cumulative social equity impacts have resulted in a lack of the workforce needed to meet the hiring demands and state energy and climate goals.

**Knowledge is Power**

**Paving the way to Inclusion Empowering Minds and Lives**

- Historically minorities have been under represented in energy efficiency and clean energy careers.
- Black Americans represented only 12% of the workforce in CT 6% Source: U.S. Energy and Employment Report (2020)
- Latinos represented 16% in CT 11% of the workforce. Source: U.S. Energy and Employment Report (2020)
- To reach inclusion and equity levels we must close the gap.

## Our Proven Solutions and Tangible Results

Efficiency for All, **M=POWER continues to create and implement successful DEI workforce programs across Connecticut.** More than 30 Connecticut residents from vulnerable communities have already attained nationally recognized certifications through EFA's supportive programs. **All 30 have been successfully placed in Clean Energy careers.** More importantly, participants gained improved economic resilience and cross-cutting benefits which are outlined further in this report. These individuals are gainfully employed in our state and have attained stable housing and transportation, hope, and a path to a bright stable future. Our Program success is part of Connecticut's economic success as our adult learners become meaningful contributing engaged members of our local economy. They are now taxpayers, contributors to our combined improved environmental outcomes, and on the way to home ownership and prosperity.





# How We Do It? Our Demonstrated Success

Efficiency for All's M=POWER program *“meets people where they are at”* by providing contextualized **Agency and Prosperity Training which amends the soil allowing new seeds to sprout into new ideas.** Our training includes holistic approaches combined with wraparound services, career coaching, and physical tools. EFA also provides proven contextualized Resilience and Tenacity training, which lasts a lifetime. This approach opens participants' minds to careers they thought were previously unobtainable. Measurable metrics include improved quality of life and lowered dependency on state and federal subsidies for housing, energy, and medical insurance, as well as improved mobility and financial resilience.



## Paving Pathways to Prosperity, Teaching Agency

### Q: What are Agency and Prosperity Skills?

**A: Planning, Time Management, Problem-Solving, Communication, and Goal Setting are a few of the topics covered in M=POWER.** For example, in vulnerable populations, it is possible that adults have not yet experienced homeownership, or seen it modeled. Our data demonstrates that some adults have never obtained driver's licenses, nor have had the opportunity to work in a stable legal work environment. This excludes them from financial independence and realized success.



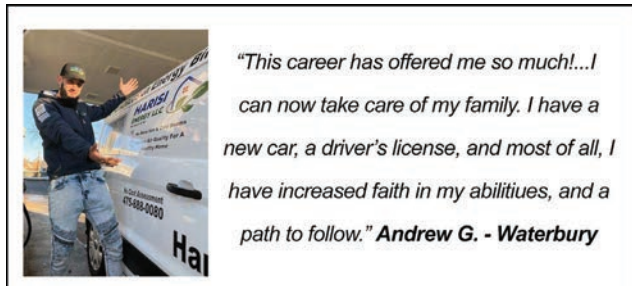
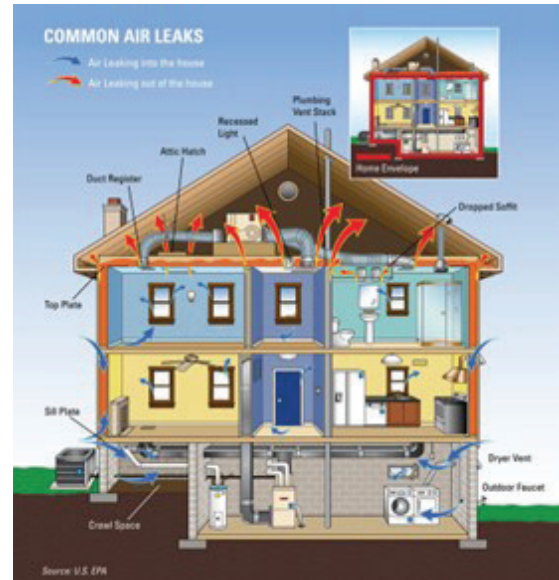
Cohort 2 M=POWER at the Connecticut Capital

*Some people call these “soft skills,” but we assert that these skills are essential keys to life and not “soft” or easy to obtain.*

Our team provides wraparound services including work attire and a full set of work tools. We intentionally teach students how to manage money, how to budget for a rainy day, and how to use their tools: T's and P's = Talking, Teamwork, Tenacity, and Talents, coupled with Planning, Prosperity, and Peaceful action-based approaches to Problem Solving.

# EQUITY = Filling the Gaps Efficiency Based Solutions are Everywhere...

Unfortunately, due to systemic gaps in our educational systems combined with cumulative societal factors of generational poverty, many residents and community members have not had equal access to homeownership, reliable transportation, or gainful employment. We recognize that continued disparity often leads to a long-term lack of generational wealth. Often, these long lists of disparities result in missed professional and personal opportunities. In vulnerable communities, youth and adults may have not had the opportunities to access core workforce skills and may also be grappling with the cumulative impacts of generational poverty and environmental injustices.



"This career has offered me so much!...I can now take care of my family. I have a new car, a driver's license, and most of all, I have increased faith in my abilities, and a path to follow." **Andrew G. - Waterbury**

*M=POWER identifies vulnerabilities, and then through intentional efforts we fill and shore up the gaps. We fix gaps both literally and physically. We address gaps in our homes, in our state's infrastructure, and we fill gaps figuratively in learning models to help our participants see themselves as the capable people they can be. We also work*

*actively to identify and collaboratively address gaps in state plans, policies, and programs.*

Participants begin our intensive program with a six-week M=POWER boot camp. After completion of certifications, M=POWER participants are placed in a six week paid hands on experience with CT Clean Energy and building science employers. M=POWER places the focus on opening doors to an independent future.

***M=POWER students arrive at their mentoring locations prepared with tools in their hands, heads, and hearts.***

This report outlines the tangible metrics from our second cohort which began on October 17, 2022, and resulted in on-the-Job placements which began on December 12, 2022.

# Diversity Any Way You Slice It

## Ethnicity Metrics + Statewide Approach

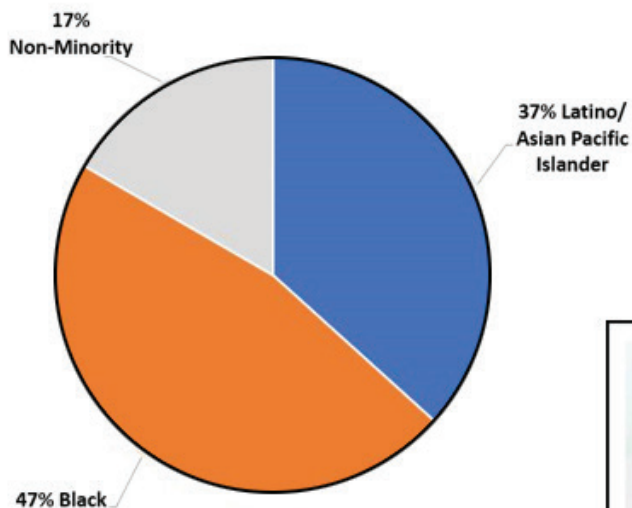
*"We are Amer-I-cans. Together We Can. Together Is Better!" - L. Colon de Mejias*



*"This career will allow me to help save energy, save lives, and extend the home's longevity by maximizing the lifespan of the building materials, it will improve the market value of the homes and the best part is that I will help the planet, our planet, our home." Ofelia R.*



*"My dream now is to find the next big bottleneck of energy efficiency industries and grow exponentially." Addans - Stamford*



*"I enjoy the job a lot... It is honestly the most fulfilling job I have ever had! The training really helped get started on my path to a better future for me and my family." Jeremiah - Hartford, CT - Proud Aiello Lead in Training*



*"I am grateful for the M=Power program. The program helped me understand what building science is and that it is a career, not just a job. The training and the transportation support I recieved made a big difference in my success." Dawn - Waterbury, CT*



*"I am honored and grateful to have been a part of the M=Power class, learning and working for a future career. This class can help anyone. I mean ANYONE!" Robert L. - Willimantic*

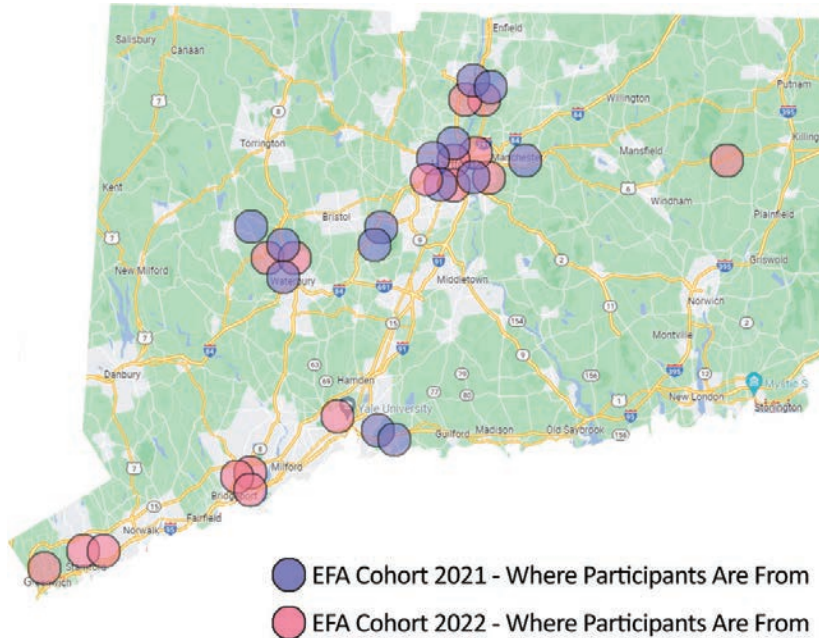


*"I see myself working a great job in this field...I now have a plan to achieve [my] goals and I have great supporters around me." James G. Hartford*



# Inclusivity - Extending Our Reach Across the State

EFA's focus on inclusivity intentionally seeks out and engages people that may have been unaware of these growing Clean Energy opportunities. ***We seek to connect underrepresented***



***populations, and environmental Justice zones to the importance of our energy infrastructure transition to Clean Energy.*** This is why EFA works hard to reach all corners of Connecticut and to connect with all ethnic groups, to provide fair access to information, education and job placement opportunities.

**EFA welcomed trainees from all over the state including East Hartford,**

Branford, Bridgeport, Hartford, Manchester, Plainville, Southington, Waterbury, Watertown, Windsor, West Haven, Willimantic, and Stamford, ensuring a diverse ethnic background.

Our recruiting places Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the forefront of training implementation plans. We meet people where they are. We shore up any potential areas of growth, while simultaneously providing guidance and training that helps these vulnerable individuals navigate new waters of workplace responsibilities and life changes that full-time work creates, including benefits as well as cliff planning where when income increases, families sometimes lose some or all economic support.



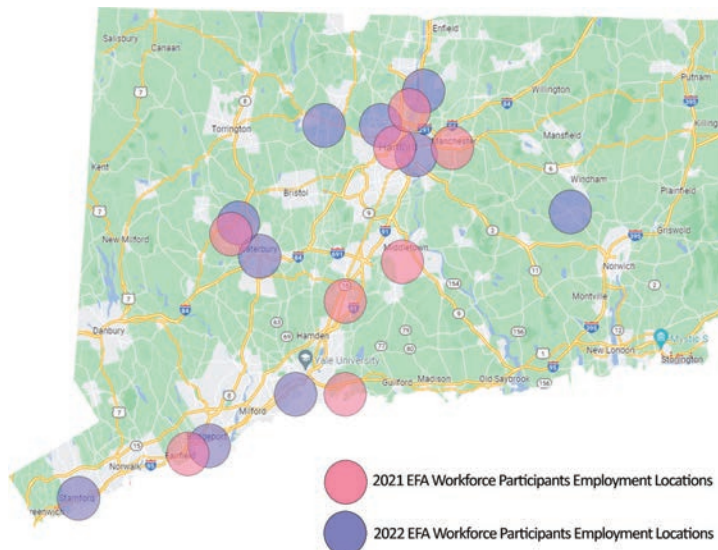
From Left to Right: A few of the M=POWER students on day one. Brandon McGee, Leticia Colon de Mejias at Goodwin University's Advancing Racial Equity Symposium. Lillian Brough and EFA Recruiting at the Connecticut State Veterans Stand Down CT Event in Rocky Hill.

# Employment Locations Across the State - Inclusion

M=POWER helps connect residents to local Clean Energy work opportunities. We continue to actively engage contractors from the growing Clean Energy industry. Our contractor base includes insulators, energy assessors, sales and marketing, customer service, windows, installers, and HVAC professionals, to name a few of the growing workspaces in our state.

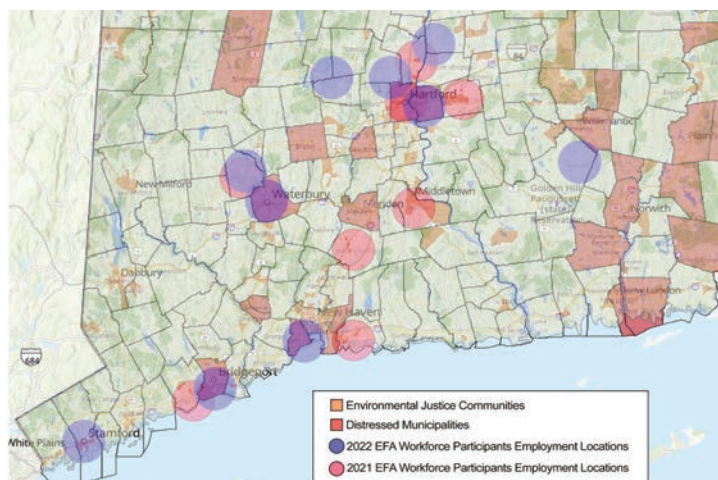
Together is better! Together we can. No man, woman, or child left behind.

From North, South, East to West, from Hartford to Waterbury, New Haven to Middletown, EFA workforce outcomes are far-reaching and inclusive.



*\*Job placement sites: Branford, Bridgeport, East Hartford, Fairfield, Hartford, Lebanon, Manchester, Middletown, Manchester, Wallingford, Shelton, Stamford, Watertown, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.*

When you overlay the EFA workforce participants mapping over the environmental justice communities mapping, you can see the distribution of participant employment locations and those of environmental justice communities.



*\*Participant Employment Placement, Environmental Justice Communities, and Distressed Municipalities Overlay Mapping.*

Imagine the possibilities of what we as a state or our nation can achieve if we invest in our local communities. We can put Americans to work solving for the cumulative impacts of environmental justice and climate change together through action-based approaches.



# Funding Distribution per Participant and Return on Investment (ROI)

The cost of investing in our state residents is greatly overshadowed by the ROI and social benefits of doing so. Unfortunately, the cycles of generational poverty do not end unless there is intentional action. EFA's M=POWER program offers the opportunity to take action in a measured matrix based approach.

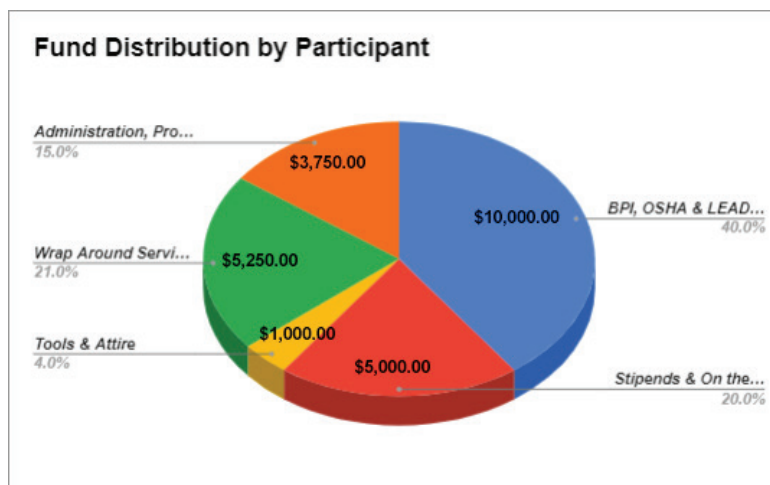
The cost of sponsoring one participant is approximately \$25,000.00. This cost is dependent on the overall need of the participant at intake. The \$25k per person provides technical and life skills training, wrap-around support services such as transportation, daycare, national certifications, stipends, paid on the job training, work attire, and tools.

The projected costs per participant are broken down into the following five categories:

<i>Funding Category</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Amount</i>
BPI, OSHA & LEAD RRP Certifications and Life Skills Training	40.00%	\$10,000.00
Stipends & On the Job Training	20.00%	\$5,000.00
Tools & Attire	4.00%	\$1,000.00
Wrap Around Services (Transportation, Driver's License, Housing, and Childcare)	21.00%	\$5,250.00
Administration, Program Management and Reporting	15.00%	\$3,750.00

***Out of every dollar invested in each participant, 85 cents go directly to the participant.***

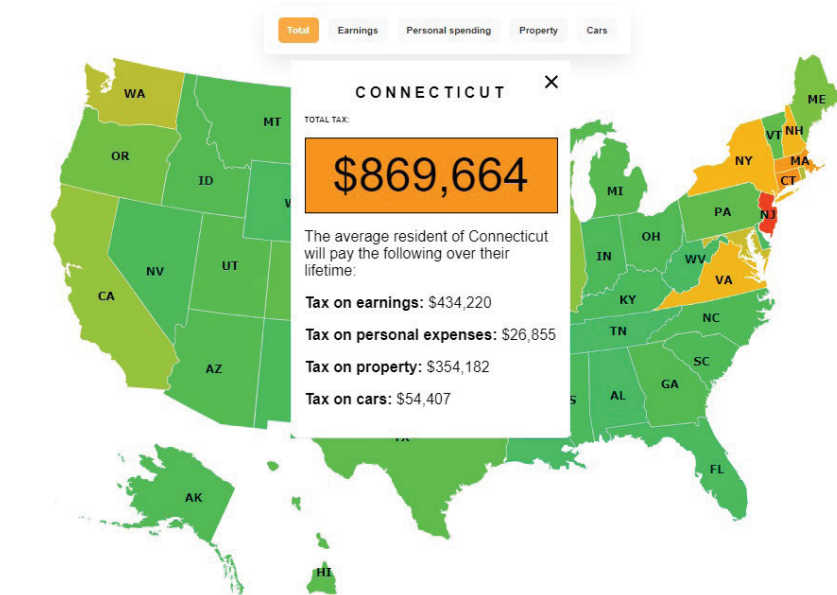
The projected distribution of the cost per participant is based on the program measured outcomes of past participants.



After completion of the 12-week program and the placement of participants with participating employers, participants are continuously monitored and supported on an as needs basis for a full year.

Our goal is to train and place 100% of participants in clean energy careers, and to work with participants to ensure successful employment thereafter.

## Connecticut Residents Lifetime Taxes and Return on Investment



According to Forbes, an annual ROI of approximately 7% or greater is considered a good ROI for an investment in stocks. This is also about the average annual return of the S&P 500, accounting for inflation.

<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/investing/roi-return-on-investment/#:~:text=What%20is%20a%20Good%20ROI,S%26P%20500%2C%20accounting%20for%20inflation.>

Utilizing the estimated cost per participant of \$25,000.00, the average taxes paid by a Connecticut resident at \$869,664.00, and a payback period of 50 years, we can determine the annual return on investment (ROI) ratio using the Annual Return on Investment formula listed below:

$$ROI = ((1 + (\text{Net Gain or Loss over a Lifetime} / \text{Cost of Participant}))^{1/n} - 1) \times 100$$

$$ROI = (((1 + (\$869,664.00 - \$25,000.00) / \$25,000.00))^{1/50} - 1) \times 100$$

$$ROI = 7.36\%$$

If we take a more conservative approach and substitute the average taxes paid by an individual across the entire United States at \$480,407.00, then the return on investment over the same 50 year period is slightly below 7% at 6.09%.

$$\text{ROI} = (((1 + (\$480,407.00 - \$25,000.00) / \$25,000.00))^{1/50} - 1) \times 100$$

**ROI = 6.09%**

The ROI does not include or account for the additional savings to the State of Connecticut and tax paying residents related to the decreased dependence on state subsidies such as Section 8 housing vouchers, food stamps, childcare and medical insurance to name a few.

***M=POWER students quickly become stable contributing members of society, ending cycles of generational poverty.***

As participants transition into careers that provide a path to self-resilience, they begin to move away from these subsidies which if accounted for would double to triple the ROI.

Due to the lack of public information on the actual cost of subsidizing families over a lifetime, and over several generations, it is difficult to calculate the projected benefits and ROI of providing the training and services offered through EFA'S M=POWER program.

The most important point is that EFA'S M=POWER program is a hand up, not a hand out.

We can help to end generational poverty and begin to build generational wealth in a way that benefits our state and program participants.

# M=POWER Workforce Development Outcomes

## M=POWER 2021



Placed Participants



**Cohort 1** - October to December 2021. The goal for the Fall 2021 Cohort was to train and place 10 participants. EFA trained and placed 15 graduates who are currently still gainfully employed with licensed Connecticut contractors.

## M=POWER 2022



Placed Participants



**Cohort 2** - October to December 2022. The goal for the Fall 2022 Cohort was to train and place 15 participants, EFA placed 16 graduates who are currently working with licensed Connecticut contractors.

## Nationally Recognized Certifications Obtained

Our Contractor Network worked collaboratively with the public utilities and EFA to create a standard set of certifications which are commonly required to work in the Connecticut Clean Energy industry. These courses are completed during the six week in person M=POWER training program. Courses are taught by nationally certified master instructors. Mentoring and study groups help participants prepare for the rigorous math, science, and writing portions of the exams. Students also complete public speaking, planning, budgeting, scheduling, communications, Google tools and customer service training.

## Trade Certifications

Upon completion of the program, each participant will earn the following certifications:

1. **BPI Building Analyst** – Participants learn how to perform comprehensive, whole-home assessments, identify problems at their root cause, and prescribe and prioritize solutions based on building science.

## Trade Certifications (Continued)

2. **BPI Envelope Professional** – Participants learn to prescribe improvements to tighten the building envelope (shell), stop uncontrolled air leakage, and optimize comfort, durability, and HVAC performance.

3. **BPI Multifamily Building Analyst (MFBA)** - The BPI MFBA conducts energy audits and performs overall building performance evaluations of multifamily buildings. These building professionals examine the relationship between the building's various systems and apply knowledge and skills to complete comprehensive evaluations of existing buildings to make prioritized recommendations that improve occupant health, safety, and comfort as well as the building's Energy Efficiency and durability.



4. **Infiltration and Duct Leakage** – Participants gain the skills needed to offer duct leakage and blower door tests, in compliance with IECC codes for new home construction or existing home remodels.

5. **Healthy Home Evaluator** – Participants will learn to assess home-based environmental health and safety hazards and provide a prioritized list of recommendations to address those hazards.

6. **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)** – OSHA 10 teaches basic safety and health information to entry-level workers in construction and the general industry. It is part of the OSHA Outreach Training Program, which explains serious workplace hazards, workers' rights, employer responsibilities, and how to file an OSHA complaint.



7. **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA Confined Space)** - OSHA Confined Space teaches how to keep yourself and those around you safe while working in a confined space is an essential part of many jobs. Working with confined spaces exists within many workplaces. These confined spaces are defined as spaces with configurations that hinder the activities of employees who must enter, work in, and exit them.

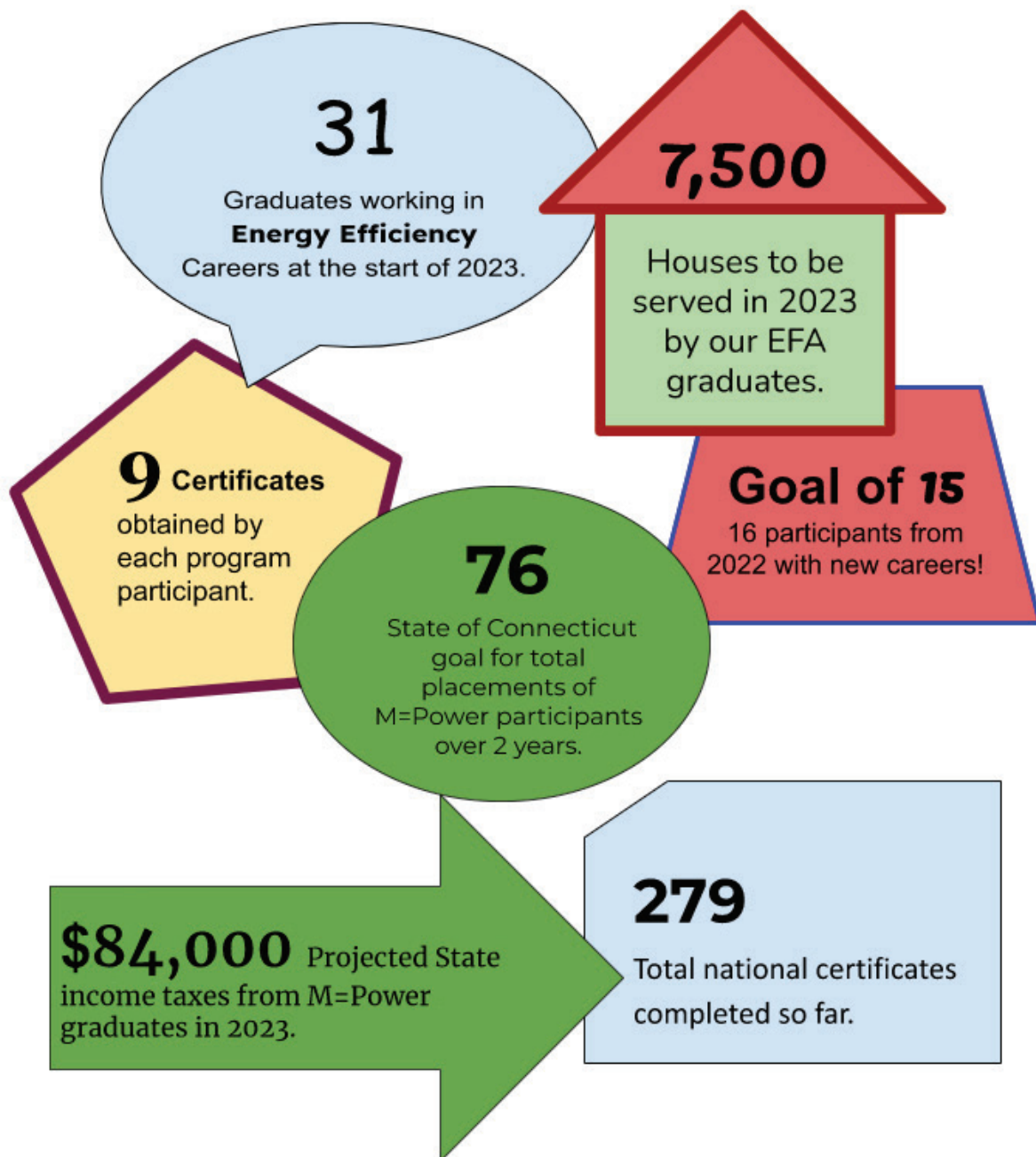
8. **Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (RRP)** – EPA's Lead Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule (RRP) Rule requires that firms performing renovation, repair, and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities, and preschools built before 1978 be certified by EPA (or an EPA-authorized state), use certified renovators who are trained by EPA-approved training providers and follow lead-safe work practices.

9. **DOE Home Energy Score Exam Prep** - Developed by DOE and its national laboratories, the Home Energy Score™ provides homeowners, buyers, and renters directly comparable and credible information about a home's energy use.



# M=POWER Results by the Numbers

*\*State of CT Goal in 2022 was to train and Place 15 per cohort*



# Life Changing Benefits

## Creating Agency

Agency is required for adults to take control of their own lives. Agency requires understanding of processes and systems which all adults must navigate to intentionally plan for their futures and their success. In many cases vulnerable populations have not had the same opportunities to attain and master self-sufficiency skills, or decision making skills, planning skills, or to demonstrate leadership. This leaves them at a disadvantage for problem solving and self-direction.



## Resilience Building

Resilience building instructs on life skills which empower our students with the ability to ride the ups and downs of life, creating longevity in the work environment. This is why M=POWER instructs participants utilizing real life examples to contextualize life's big choices.

KEY resilience skills are covered by M=POWER: researching jobs, purchasing housing, budgeting for the households, and planning for the rainy days or a "flat tire." We ground these principles while inspiring participants to act and to create a positive attitude toward learning and working. We also lean heavy on how to respond intentionally rather than overreacting to unexpected events. When we plan ahead, we are more likely to utilize our preparedness techniques rather than reverting to past methods of reacting that may harm our professional and personal growth. We remind participants that danger is but one letter away from anger.



*"I am so thankful for this program...EFA changed the lives of my two uncles and is now having a great effect on my life. Now I see a future, a possibility for a better life, and it's because this [program] is not just for work, it's for the real world."*

*"Thank you [EFA] for everything you've done to help and for just being the people you are. I am now working, I have my license ...I'm moving into my own place very soon, it's because you've managed to not only push me, but everyone else around you towards greatness."*

**Oscar M. Waterbury**

# Participant Transportation = Improved Mobility



*“My family is safe and supported... I am so thankful for this program! I have a car, a legal driver's license and a career path with a future I can see.”*

Jawon completed M=POWER at EFA in 2021. He is now a Lead BPI Analyst in Connecticut.

Getting a job is difficult if you cannot physically get to your place of work. Participants often reported that it was hard to catch a ride, or a bus, when you need to be at work early or if you are asked to stay late. For many vulnerable communities

owning a car is a luxury and buses are not always available. Over the course of our research and direct experience there has been a common thread related to transportation needs. We fondly call this our participant's transportation “speed bumps.” Below we demonstrate creative solutions and outcomes related to transportation needs in our participant population.

## M=POWER Resolving Participants Transportation Problems

- Five of the participants did not have reliable transportation. These program participants began the course using ride shares, using uber, or with a plan to take the public bus or train. In many cases the buses would not get the participant to the training site on time.
- Four of Cohort 2 participants did not have driving licenses at the start of the program.

## Innovative Solutions

With the help of supportive wraparound services and budgeting training our M=POWER students achieved the following outcomes:

- One participant was able to purchase a car by budgeting the weekly stipend.
- Three participants were able to obtain the help they needed to fix their vehicles through the use of budgeting
- One participant was able to utilize public transportation to meet his transportation work needs.

## Licenses Obtained = Creative Solutions Continued

EFA scheduled a driving course with Global Driving School in Windsor, CT. This course was scheduled exclusively for our students outside of their regular operating hours to accommodate the students. EFA paid for all of the students to attend this course. All participants were able to complete the course and are now driving legally.

## Housing Needs Resolved = Home Is Where the Heart Is

Homelessness and home instability are on the rise in Connecticut and across the nation. Having a safe shelter is important to supporting a stable career advancement, and it is part of a dignified human experience. Increasing home ownership for communities of color supports the state and federal Equity lens. Homeownership opens doors to Clean Energy benefits, and increases a community's overall economic resilience.

M=POWER includes wrap-around services to support participants accessing stable living conditions. This includes paths to home ownership, a hand up versus a hand out approach.



***“One cannot get ahead without a roof or a bed. It is difficult to be gainfully employed without a stable living situation.” ~ Leticia Colon de Mejias***

### **Problem: Four out of 31 participants were experiencing housing insecurity or were homeless when they began the M=POWER program.**

Many vulnerable populations experience unstable housing situations. Planning for stable housing can be overwhelming. There is a general lack of access to affordable housing. As participants obtain higher paying careers their income rate grows, this leads to subsidy cliffs which can leave participants in unstable living situations.

**Housing Solutions** = M=POWER assesses our participants' needs for creating a stable foundation to leverage for longterm workplace success. Through M=POWER's training on generational wealth building, and individual supportive discussions, we offer a well rounded life budget planning course, combined with problem-solving action-based modules. All four of our participants were able to create healthier stable living arrangements.

**M=POWER creates Paths to Home Ownership** - Three of our students are now completely off housing subsidies and have begun the process of home ownership. Home ownership offers a stable cost of living combined with the agency of deciding how you want to operate your home energy systems. Owning a home creates generational wealth over generational dependency on “affordable housing”. M=Power makes housing affordable, vs creating affordable housing. This path includes teaching participants how and why to change spending habits, how to increase savings, how and why to increase household overall income to meet the incoming expenses, understanding energy costs and the cost of operating a household free of subsidy. Last but not least, we teach students about debt ratios, bank accounts, credit building, how to lower credit risk, taxes, and why a stable job opens doors to the American dream.



# Financial Stability and Economic Success

*Lift as we climb and never give up. No man or woman left behind.  
Together is better. Together we can.*

***If one has never seen financial stability or known life without subsidy, how will one know how to utilize cash and money wisely?***



**Problem:** Six M=POWER participants did not have bank accounts at the time of program enrollment. Lack of bank account creates barriers to payment and excludes workers from receiving the benefits of direct deposits. Bank accounts also open the door to positive credit scores and proper financial accounting. Over the last two cohorts we noted participants' reliance on family members for cashing checks, or they might have paid late fees due to lack of ability to pay a bill on-line. They also have higher interest rates on their purchases, and a general lack of understanding of how banks and creditors operate.

**Solutions:** We taught individuals the following skills using daily learning modules:

- How to open a bank account.
- How to use a checkbook.
- How to set up direct deposit.
- Intentionally budgeting household weekly expenses.
- How to understand and file taxes.
- How to plan for a rainy day.
- How to use their resources wisely.
- Career planning and management of life transitions or career changes.

## Results = Long-Term Wealth-Building and Financial Literacy

- All participants now have bank accounts.
- Credit Scores have increased.
- Non-subsidized housing obtained.
- Savings Plans created.
- Responsibility achieved.



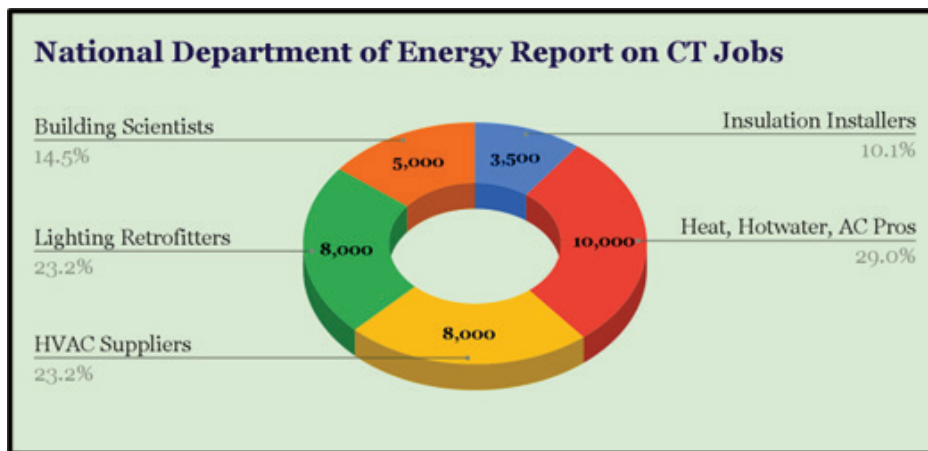


## Cross Cutting Benefits

*Creating more energy-efficiency jobs in Connecticut will result in fewer people on subsidies or unemployment.*

## Jobs Created = Climate Equity and Economic Growth

Over 34,000 Connecticut residents work in Energy Efficiency. Their work through the EnergizeCT programs have helped to offset our carbon emissions, improved CT's health and economy, and relieved the need to create additional energy power plants.



**Energy Efficiency has been providing jobs quietly across America.** Investments made in the energy-efficiency workforce offer the highest return on investment of any Clean Energy job.

A few of the Energy Efficiency career paths include, but are not limited to, energy auditors, insulation sales, insulation installers, air sealing experts, building scientists, program administrators, data entry, customer service and reporting experts to name a few of the growing career opportunities in our state.

### CMC Energy Services



*"Overall, Francisco has been progressing nicely and has been able to expand his building science knowledge. He is currently learning the proper way to set up various industry-related diagnostic tests and we hope to soon have him working as a fully functioning lead technician in the near future."*

**- Tim Fabiuen**

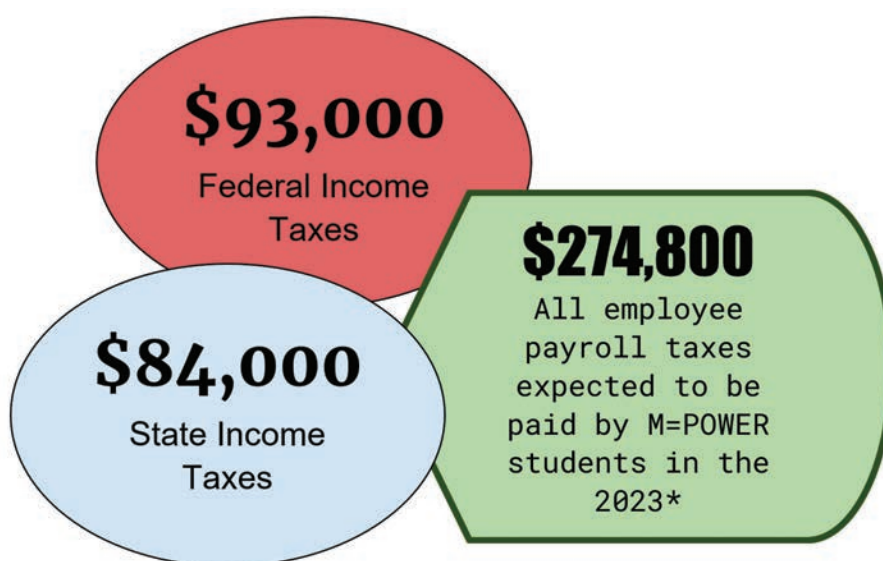
# M=POWER CT Economic Outcomes

## *M=POWER Creates Economic Gains for All*

### Community Engagement, Job Placement and Economic Resilience Building

Our Program success is part of Connecticut's economic success as our adult learners become meaningful contributing engaged members of our local economy. They are now taxpayers, contributors to our combined improved environmental outcomes, and on the way to home ownership and prosperity.

### Taxes Contributed Annually by Gainfully Employed M=POWER Students



*\*It is projected that 95% of program participants will continue to work full-time. If funding to support M=POWER is increased, M=POWER would graduate an additional 40 students per year. By the end of 2032, EFA will have supported 348 Connecticut residents working in the Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency industry. Assuming a conservative earning rate of \$20/hr M=POWER graduates will pay upwards of \$16 million in collective taxes over 10 years. 10.1% of Connecticut residents are in poverty with Connecticut ranked 48th in wealth inequality, according to [talkpoverty.org](http://talkpoverty.org).*



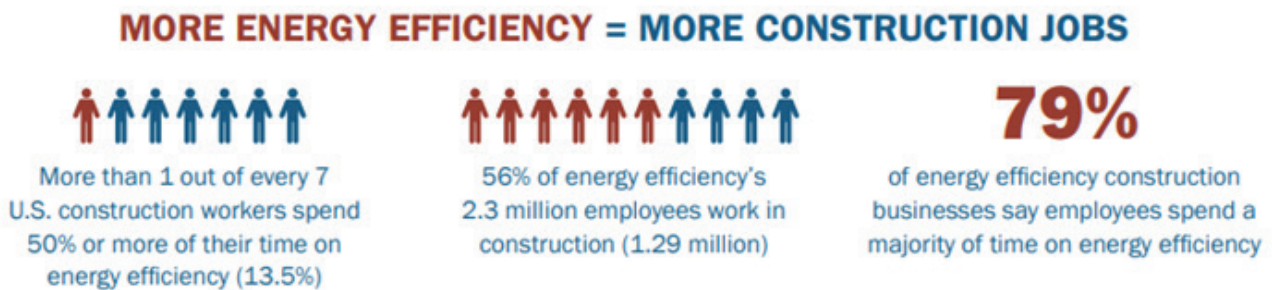
#### **Harisi Energy**

*"Andrew has turned into a new person equipped with his building science knowledge...His work ethic shows a promising future lead tech role in our company. Andrew comes ready and equipped every day to tackle any challenges that may arise." - Martin Harisi, CEO*

## Economic Growth Supporting Small & Large Businesses

**M=POWER** helps Connecticut business grow by linking small businesses to trained workers. **M=Power** provides small businesses a six week period with paid training. This approach removes the fear of trying a new employee which may have just attained new Clean Energy career skills. As Clean Energy businesses expand in Connecticut, the need to learn new energy skills and to hire trained staff is also growing. Many small fuel delivery companies, solar companies, and heating repair companies have now added Energy Efficiency to their business offerings.

More and more residents and businesses want new technology and lower energy bills. This new demand is driving the energy and construction industry to support lowered energy burdens on their customer base by providing energy assessments, air-sealing, and insulation combined with high efficiency heating, water savings, solar, heat pumps, and tightening of home thermal boundaries in basements, attics, and walls, to help residents save on heat loss in winter, and avoid high heat gains in summer.



<https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs-in-America-2019-National-Summary.pdf>

Many minority-owned and operated businesses have grown to offer Energy Efficiency and solar combinations which help ratepayers save energy and save money. For example between 2011 and 2017, **Energy Efficiencies Solutions** grew from 1 staff member to 30 staff members in 2017. **Home Comfort Practice** grew from 1 team to 90 employees in 10 years. Other EFA contractor partners have experienced growth and are seeking to hire trained work-ready Connecticut residents.

There are over 34,000 Energy Efficiency workers in CT and over 40 registered Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy companies in our state. Additionally, owning a small Energy Efficiency company offers economic opportunity to enter a world of deeper economic growth and offers the chance to become a job creator in our communities.

Learn more at <https://energizect.com/contractor-portal/participating-contractors> and <https://energizect.com/contractor-portal-residential-contractor>.

# Our Contractor Network = Supporting Business

We have the added benefit of contractor collaboration provided by the small Energy Efficiency businesses located in Connecticut. These businesses are in dire need of trained individuals to tackle the national infrastructure plans which will provide Connecticut a chance to reach our energy independence goals while creating and maintaining local jobs.



Our expert contractors provide on-the-job training for Connecticut's residents. This helps to ensure our residents access all of the benefits that our Clean Energy transition has to offer.

*"It is not enough to promise the American dream. We must connect Americans to the American dream. What better way to support the dream of homeownership, dignity, and self-reliance than to provide someone a career? A hand-up is always better than a hand-out"* - **Leticia Colon de Mejias**

Efficiency for All fights daily to ensure equal access to Clean Energy programs, resources, and revenue for Connecticut's most vulnerable populations. **Knowledge is Power. M=POWER seeks to provide that knowledge to all of Connecticut.**

Due to the program's tremendous success, our contractor network is increasing rapidly. We are receiving weekly requests to join our network. Please contact us if you are a contractor in CT and would like to join our network of mentors and are willing to hire.



*"The Efficiency for All M=POWER program helps contractors by connecting them to workers and it is helping Connecticut residents get back to work Post- Pandemic. Many young people have lost direction. I can attest that this program provides direction and inspires them to keep going and never give up. I, myself, was an entry technician in 2009. Now, I own my own business and have the joy of providing employment to other Connecticut residents. This is a win for small business, our economy, our energy stability, and our environment."* **Boone Synakorn - CEO**

***Better Building Performance, EnergizeCT Contractor***



# Community Engagement



Cradle to Career approaches are deeply needed in Connecticut's **37 Environmental Justice Communities**. This need is demonstrated by the high unemployment rates, and lack of minority representation in Clean Energy workers, and by the lack of minorities connected to solar, resilient housing, or Clean Energy careers.

\*According to C.G.S. Section 32-9p, a distressed municipality should be based on "high unemployment and poverty, aging housing stock and low or declining rates of growth in job creation, population, and per capita income. [Environmental Justice Communities \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/deep/energy-environment/programs/EnvironmentalJusticeCommunities/)

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Community engagement is critical to increasing Diversity Equity and Inclusion in our energy and environmental plans. This includes Clean Energy plans and climate resilience planning.

### *How can one be included if they are unaware of the planning or reasons for the Clean Energy transition?*

This is why EFA is keenly focused on ensuring that communities have inclusive opportunities to connect to employment, education, and Clean Energy benefits. We connect participants to information on home Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy resources. We also work to connect participants and their families to financial resilience. We partner with local nonprofits such as Green Eco Warriors, a minority-operated nonprofit, that directly supports familial education and a deeper understanding of the interconnection between our energy plans and our environment and individual household budgets as well as larger economies of scale. We partner with CT Park and Forest Association to teach interconnectedness between humans and nature deepening participant's understanding of the importance of our individual and collective choice on the environments we live in.



*Left to Right: Asylum Hill Energy Fair at Sigourney Park; Maria Sanchez Elementary, October 2022  
- Leticia teaches students about Agency, Climate, Resiliency, and Sustainability*

We provide NGSS educational materials, in-person learning, and on-line education in Title One Schools and vulnerable Environmental Justice Communities. Learn more at [www.gewportal.org](https://www.gewportal.org).

# Inclusion and Equity: Improving Where We Live, Work, Learn and Play through Community Partnerships



October 2022 EFA partnered with Green Eco Warriors on community engagement, resilience building, and climate education.

Green Eco Warriors and Efficiency For ALL coordinated, attended, or sponsored over 50 education and community engagement events and activities in CT vulnerable communities. The following Connecticut schools were provided NGSS energy and climate action education, and live performances in 2022: Rawson Elementary School, Annie Fisher, Killingly Elementary School, Oliver Ellsworth Elementary, Maria Sanchez Elementary School and the Stamford Summer School Program.

**5** Connecticut  
Schools  
Served in  
2022

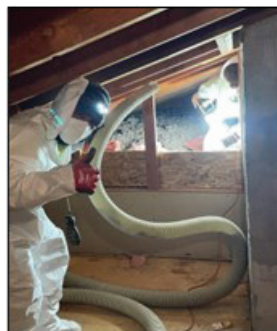
**50**  
Community  
Events

**7,000**  
CT Youth supported  
with NGSS Climate  
and Energy  
Materials

Learn about our Cradle to Career Pathways at [Articles | Green Eco Warriors \(gewportal.org\)](#) and [Kids become Heroes the WARRIOR WAY](#). Access NGSS materials at [Shop Resources | Green Eco Warriors \(gewportal.org\)](#).



In partnership with Green Eco Warriors, EFA provided a safe community Halloween Celebration.



The work we do provides real jobs, filling real gaps to save energy and lives.



Licensed Connecticut contractors met with the participants, expanding their minds to new possibilities.

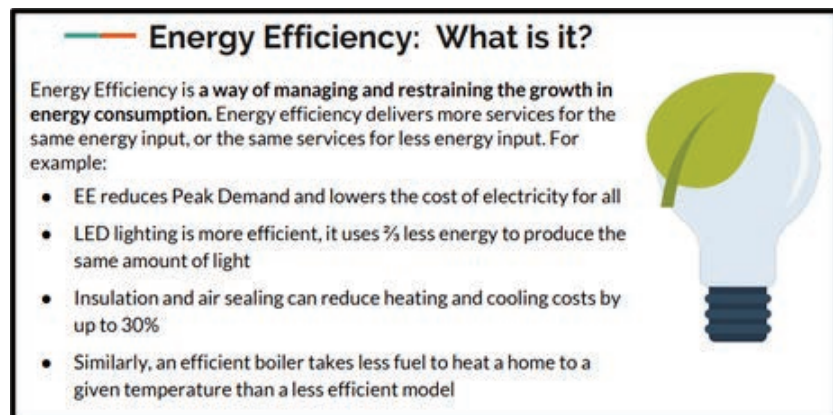
# Improving Energy and Environmental Outcomes = Environmental Justice

Connecticut has some of the [oldest and leakiest housing in the nation](#). This is coupled with one of the [highest costs of energy per capita in the nation](#). The combined factors leave our energy grid and our residents with an unsure energy future, and has resulted in over 400,000 CT residents struggling with [unmanageable energy bills](#). Additionally, **Connecticut has an 'F' air quality rating due to stationary sources of pollution (power plants, houses, and buildings).**

**Energy Efficiency (EE) is the least expensive way to address aging housing, high energy prices, and carbon emissions.**

EE is the best solution to pollution because it offers cross-cutting benefits including improving housing by making it safer, increasing residential resilience, and making energy more affordable by lowering

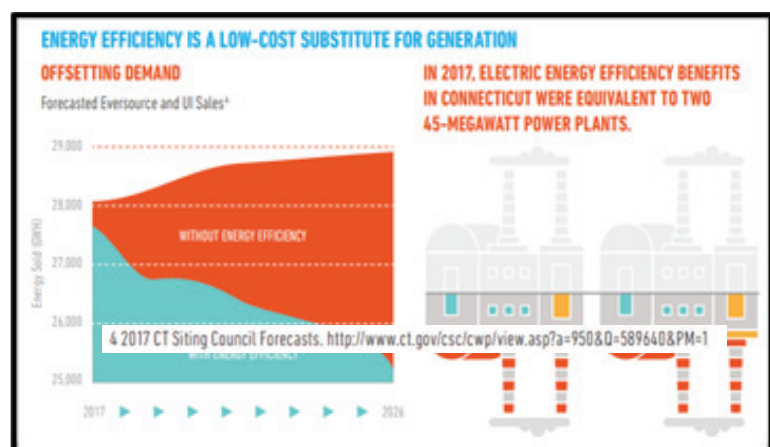
demand at the power plant and lowering demands for home heating fuels. This stabilizes our energy grid allowing Clean Energy to become widely accessible. Beyond these amazing benefits, EE also saves lives by identifying gas leaks and high levels carbon monoxide (CO,) as well as addressing other indoor and outdoor energy-related health hazards, and educating Connecticut residents on ways to increase healthy living. [Addressing Health and Affordability Challenges for Low-Income Families – Efficiency For All](#)



## Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience


Residential and commercial building Energy Efficiency is the critical first step to any energy plan which intends to battle climate change and its negative and far-reaching environmental and health impacts. Residential retrofits often result in a 30% energy savings for the residential customer and lower carbon emissions and pollution on site where the upgrades occur and at

the power plant (referred to by DEEP as stationary sources of pollution). The energy we save is the pollution we do not generate. [Energy Efficiency In Connecticut](#)





# Projected M=POWER Carbon Reduction Outcomes

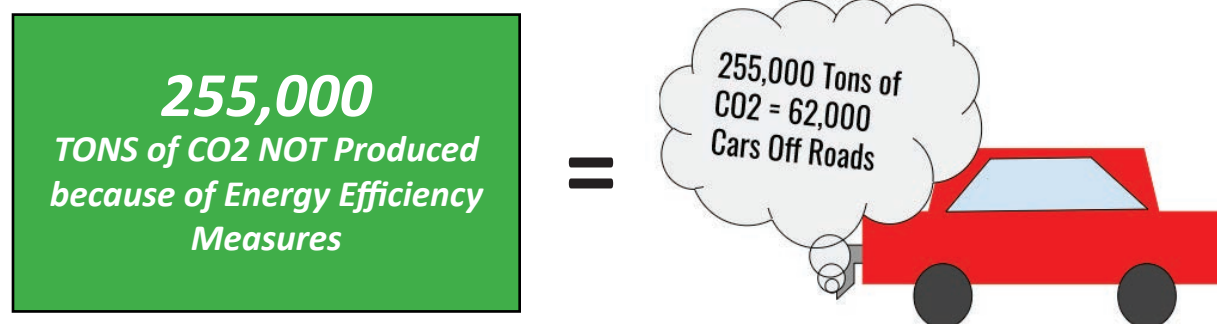


### Mitigates Climate Change

- Energy efficiency reduces harmful emissions emitted by non-renewable power plants such as oil and natural gas
- Carbon Dioxide is the leading cause of global warming and sea level rise; lowering our carbon emissions by reducing our need for power through energy efficiency is the most cost-effective, large-scale solution to our energy problems

*\*Energy Efficiency (EE) saves on average 15 MMBTU per home. If the combined classes (Cohort 1 + Cohort 2 = 31 participants) perform EE services on 1-2 homes per day X 5 days per week X 50 weeks per year, they will reduce the amount of carbon monoxide (CO) generated by 255,000 tons. Reducing residential and*

*power plant emissions alike from heating, cooling, electricity and domestic hot water demands.*



## Reducing Energy Use Leads to Better Health

### Energy Efficiency provides a pathway to positive health outcomes

It is estimated that 40% of diagnosed asthma is associated with home exposures such as moisture, temperatures variations, and pests. Energy Efficiency and weatherization aim to improve these conditions, which in turn lead to better health outcomes for residents. A 2014 study found a 12% decrease in emergency department asthma-related visits and a 48% decline in poor health among adults who received home weatherization services.

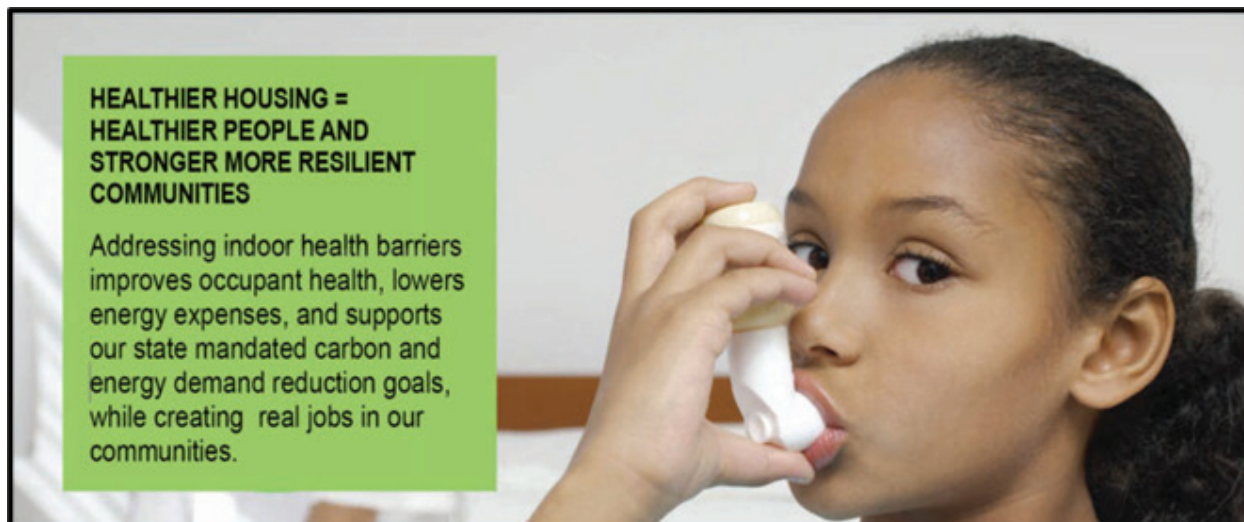
### ***Energy Efficiency Prevents 4 Largest Health Killers***

“The health benefits available from Energy Efficiency are impressive. Air pollution from power plants contributes to the four leading causes of death in the U.S.: cancer, chronic lower respiratory diseases, heart disease, and stroke. We can use Energy Efficiency to save lives and help slow global warming. Those benefits are going to be felt now and for decades into the future.”

**- Barbara Gottlieb, Director for environment and health at Physicians for Social Responsibility**



## Health Improvements



## Reducing Energy Waste = Better Health

[Climate Equity as it relates to climate action](#), is the assurance of environmental justice, and equitable access to resources, including basic necessities such as safe shelter, water, food, heat, and light, as well as opportunities for safe employment to support oneself and one's family, equal access to community supports such as public education, public transportation, healthcare and mental health care. Lowering Energy Waste lowers pollution indoors and outdoors. Save Energy, Save Lives.

*Unfortunately, not all Connecticut residents have experienced equal access to home resilience or Clean Energy. 30% of homes in Connecticut have one or more safety concerns that have excluded them from accessing our Clean Energy programs and services.*

## Simple Solution to Indoor Health Barriers

Energy Efficiency provides a pathway to positive health outcomes Increased thermal comfort associated with a weatherized building envelope, allows residents to shelter in place in extreme hot and cold temperatures even during power outages.

Breaking soiled approaches and removing health barriers ensures households are served comprehensively, resulting in lowered energy expenses, lower energy demands on our grid, lowered pollution, and lowered carbon emissions.

## Health Impacts Study of Avoiding Power Plant Pollution with Energy Efficiency

The American Council for an Energy Efficiency Economy (ACEEE) and Social Responsibility found that reducing energy consumption in the United States by just **15%** could have enormous annual impacts on our public health.

**30,000**

Fewer  
Asthma  
Attacks

**\$20 BILLION**

Avoided  
Health  
Harms

**6 LIVES**

Saved  
Every  
Day

## HARTFORD

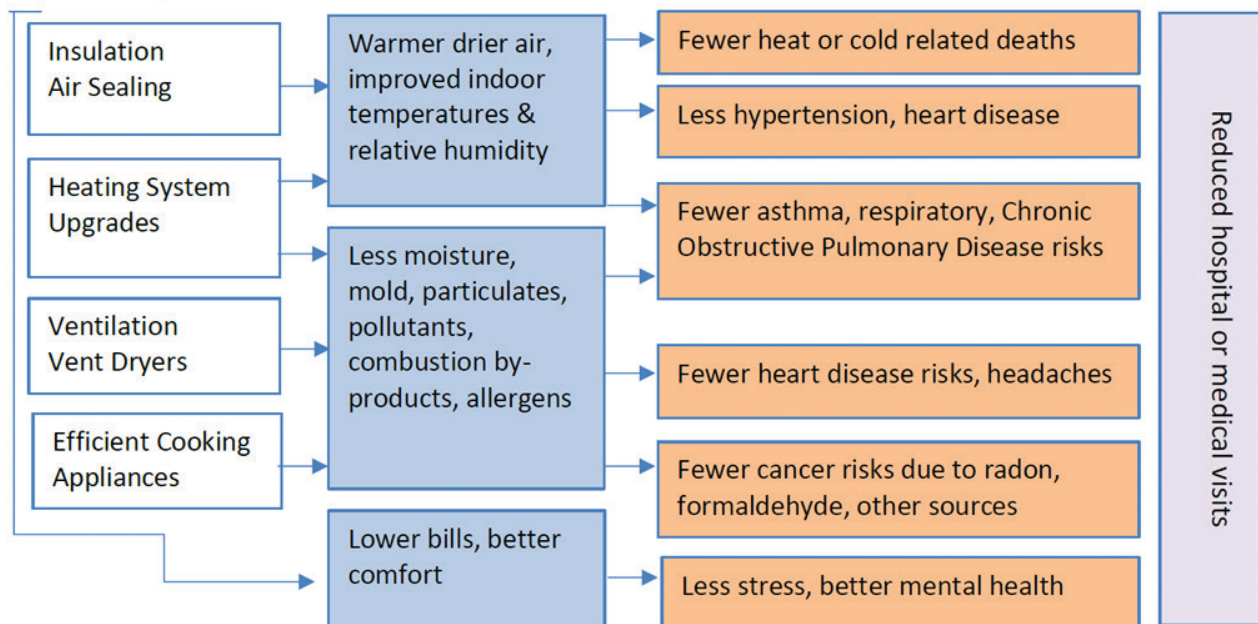
A **15% reduction**  
in energy use  
could  
**reduce health  
impacts by  
\$73 per capita  
annually**  
15th highest in the  
nation among  
large metro areas

This will ultimately expand the number of low to moderate income residents served in our state. Additional benefits include creating local jobs and addressing long standing affordable safe housing issues, and permanently lowering energy expenses. Solving for weatherization barrier funding in CT is a critical issue. These barriers limit ratepayers' access to energy saving services that their utility bill payments help fund.

## Literally Saves Lives

30% of CT housing stock has health and safety issues which are identified as part of an Energy Efficiency assessment. Mold , Asbestos, High CO, and Gas leaks are uncovered daily by Connecticut Building Performance Scientists during routine inspections.

Figure: Occupant Health and Indoor Environmental Benefits of Residential EE



## Conclusion



M=POWER has already changed lives for the better and we are expanding how we increase positive economic outcomes in vulnerable communities. In the last two years our metric based outcomes demonstrate that we are capable of moving participants out of hopelessness and connecting them to a prosperous path forward. We have witnessed participants complete hundreds of nationally recognized certifications, connecting to career paths which pay between \$17 and \$30 an hour. We have seen participants garner higher levels of understanding of how local government works, why taxes are important, and we have helped them find their footing accessing legal driving licenses and reliable transportation.


All that is exciting, but the most excitement comes from watching participants bloom into the amazing community contributors they become. Our graduates are working but they are now also coaching teams of kids, joining parent associations, organizing home ownership clubs, and working on upgrading their own communities. M=POWER graduates are reaching into communities and connecting them to energy savings, home resilience, lowered water bills, and improved solar power. M=POWER graduates are sharing what they know to help others grow! They are connected to healthier ways of living and new methods of problem solving.

The contractors we work with are experiencing growth and economic gains, and our Clean Energy transition is building momentum in the residential sectors, where the biggest cross gains can be accomplished. We have seen excellence prevail in our student outcomes, but that is not enough. There are many cumulative environmental justice and economic justice goals to be accomplished before our work is complete.

## Filling the Gaps

EFA is currently seeking additional funding partners to support the statewide approach in a more efficient way. It is important that the state and industry consider stronger investments in Connecticut entities that have shown proven success in increasing the diversity of workforce programs and placements of workers from vulnerable communities.

The state and business leaders must also take a closer look at how we are allocating funding



for climate action plans to ensure that the vulnerable communities are truly gaining access to the benefits of the state energy plan and Green Bank funding. Methods and metrics that can quantify the benefits of support would indicate increased jobs in vulnerable communities, or reflect increased energy savings in vulnerable communities with stationary sources of pollution (power plants, industry, houses, and buildings), and we would track increased positive health outcomes, such as lowered asthma rates in our vulnerable EJ communities. These are just a few suggested methods of tracking equity based workforce and energy planning achievements. Another metric could be to see increasing training centers and increased classes offered directly in the EJ communities.

As a minority operated community based organization that works in Clean Energy, EFA has long experienced a lack of funding. Our current budget gap of one million dollars has made it difficult to obtain the needed resources to expand our workforce programs.

Despite our demonstrated success in 2021, our proposal, like many others, was not fully funded by the state. Underfunding and partial funding of modest nonprofit budgets limits capacity to serve state wide and to expand the “good work”.

Efficiency For All has garnered support through an agreement with industry leaders Avangrid and Eversource. This braided funding allows EFA to provide the specific certifications that are required to work in residential Energy Efficiency programs. This incredible partnership helped to fill part of the funding gap by paying for the certifications and aligning with DEI metrics for 40 of our participants.

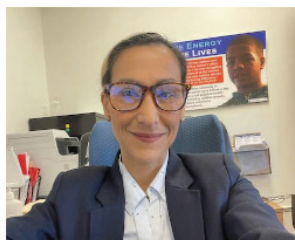
However, the gap remains and we are in need of additional financial support to serve Connecticut’s most vulnerable communities.

Through the course of our work we have continued to share what we know and plant seeds as we grow. With the proper support from state and industry, and with continued industry collaboration, we can tear down walls of oppression, fill gaps of energy, environmental, and economic equity, and increase the resilience and stability of our energy systems while connecting vulnerable populations to careers. When we work together we can lower dependence on subsidies and increase earned income revenue to the working residents in our state. All these things are possible, and in fact have been achieved on a small replicable scale. The time is now to create economies of scale and move the Clean Energy and resilience needle forward for all of Connecticut.

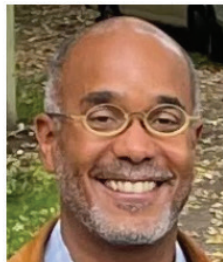


# Efficiency for All Board Members & Staff

Lifting successful DEI models, Speaking Truth to Power.



*Leticia Colon de Mejias,  
Co-founder Ex. Director,  
Co-Chair, Efficiency For All,  
M=POWER Creator*



*Lorenzo, Co-Chair of  
Efficiency For All,  
Home Comfort  
Practice, CEO*



*Demont Murphy  
Technical Trainer,  
Board Member*



*Lillian Brough,  
Community Relations,  
Government Liaison,  
M=POWER Program  
Facilitator*



*Carol Blanks-Lawson,  
M=POWER Program  
Navigator and Career Coach*



*Gabriel Difelici  
M=POWER Program  
Navigator and Career  
Coach*



*John Mitchell , National  
BPI Technical Trainer  
and Coach, Board  
Member*



*Michael Kubica,  
M=POWER Program  
Data Specialist*




*Edgardo Mejias,  
Chief Financial Officer  
Efficiency For All,*



*Rebecca Baez-Castro,  
Program Recruiter  
and Support Coach*

Our board and staff would like to thank our network of small business Energy Efficiency contractors, energy consultants, our nationally recognized training partners, our many community partners, the public utility partners, the CT Office of Workforce Strategies, many other CT energy equity advocates for their support and assistance in building the viability and momentum that will be required to ensure an equitable accessible and resilient safe energy



and environmental future for all Americans, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, or economic status.

The following people are deserving of special recognition in the building of Effective Energy Equity Solutions: Edgardo Mejias of Energy Efficiencies Solutions, Rebecca Baez, Lorenzo Wyatt at Home Comfort Practice, John Mitchell of AIOBS, Stephanie Weiner of NESE, Joe Roy and Tim Fabiuen of CMC, Glenn Reed, Janet and Chip Tanner, Steven Cowell, E4TheFuture, Kara Renaldi, Sabine Rogers, Lizzie Bunnen Pack, Skip Gordon of Andyll Research, Emily Levin and Darnell Johnson of the Building Performance Association, The Hartford Public Library (Nancy Mendez,) Ventine Richardson of STEM Betances School, Yolanda Rivera and Capital Workforce Partners, Brenda Watson and Gannon Long of Operation Fuel, Samantha Dynowski and Ann Gadwah of the CT Sierra Club, Guy West and team at Clean Water Action, Diane Duva at DEEP, Kyle Ellsworth at CT DEEP formerly of EFA, Melissa Kops CTGCB, Bernie Pelliter and Mark Skully of PACE, Jennifer Kleindeist, Wesleyan University and the City of Middletown, Dr. Laura Bozzi of Yale Center for Health and Sustainability, Mark Mitchell, CEEJAC and CTGC3, Edith Pestana and Doris Johnson of DEEP CT EJ, Jennifer Dionne, Lillian Brough, Alex Rodriguez of Save the Sound, Lori Brown, CTLCV, Connecticut Citizen Action Group (CCAG), Marianne Engleman Lado of the National EPA Office of Environmental Justice and Civil Rights for her work on Connecticut's Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3) Equity committee and the co-creation of the four equity lens.

**Without these people's perspectives, work and voices, our work would not have been possible.**



## Appendix A

### Summary for Deep Divers

The state goal for Cohort 2 was to enroll 15 participants and to place 80% in Connecticut based careers. EFA began Cohort 2 with 17 students. Prior to the course's completion one participant exited into another training pathway. 16 of the participants completed the On-the-Job Training in Connecticut. To date, almost all the individuals have already received direct offers of employment, while several others are expecting job offers before the end of their OJT training.

# The State of Connecticut Equity Requirements

[Connecticut law](#) executive order ([Executive Order No. 21-3](#)) signed into law on Dec 16, 2021 directs Connecticut executive branch state agencies to take significant actions within their authority to reduce carbon emissions and prepare for the impacts of the climate crisis and requires us to utilize the equity lens in our climate and energy planning. “Climate change is here, and it’s only going to get worse if we don’t take meaningful action,” Governor Lamont said. “In September, a bad progress report showed that we’re in danger of missing our statutory greenhouse gas reduction goals, so we need to roll up our sleeves and do the necessary work to improve. That work starts with us in the executive branch, and that’s why I’m directing our state agencies to take these actions for our environment, our public health and safety, and the incredible opportunity before us to develop our green workforce. This executive order not only protects the planet, but also protects vulnerable communities, preserves families’ budgets, and prepares our state to make the most of federal funding for sustainable, resilient infrastructure. I’m grateful to the many experts and advocates who proposed these measures.” Executive Order No. 21-3 calls for 23 actions, proposed by the Governor’s Council on Climate Change (GC3) in its [January 2021 report](#), that cut across state agencies and sectors in the following areas: <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2021/12-2021/Governor-Lamont-Signs-Executive-Order-Directing-Connecticut-State-Agencies-To-Implement-Actions#:~:text=%28HARTFORD%2C%20CT%29%20%E2%80%93%20Governor%20Ned%20Lamont%20today%20announced,prepare%20for%20the%20impacts%20of%20the%20climate%20crisis.>

- Buildings and Infrastructure
- Community climate resilience
- Health, equity, and environmental justice
- Jobs and the economy
- Clean transportation
- Natural and working lands
- Jobs and the economy
- Establishes the Connecticut Clean Economy Council to advise the governor on strategies and policies to strengthen the state’s climate mitigation, Clean Energy, resilience, and sustainability programs by identifying opportunities to leverage state and federal funding and maximize local economic development in Clean Energy, climate and sustainability; train the workforce in these areas; and support a diverse and equitable economic development and employment. The council will be composed of representatives from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, OPM, DEEP, DOT, the Office of Workforce Strategy, the Office of the Governor, the Connecticut Green Bank, Connecticut Innovations, and representatives of building trades.
- Directs DECD to include climate resilience and adaptation in scoring criteria for Brownfields grants and new Connecticut Communities Challenge.



# Health, Equity and Environmental Justice

Directs DEEP to develop a community-based air quality monitoring program, in consultation with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH); directs the department to assess whether Connecticut needs to adopt California's medium and heavy-duty vehicle emissions standards in order to meet our air quality standards and emissions reduction targets; directs DPH to establish an Office of Climate and Public Health to address the intersection of climate change and health equity; and establishes within DEEP the Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council, which will advise DEEP on current and historic environmental injustice, and further integrate environmental justice considerations into the programs, policies, and activities of DEEP.

## Community Climate Resilience

Directs DEEP to establish a Connecticut Community Climate Resilience program for plans and project development with 40% of resources targeted at municipalities where vulnerable populations reside. This investment will, among other things, help to identify the pipeline of projects that could obtain federal infrastructure funding. The executive order also directs the department to work with partners to help municipalities and councils of government implement climate resilience actions, including establishing stormwater authorities and municipal climate resilience boards enabled under [Public Act 21-115](#). Additionally, the executive order directs the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, DEEP, DAS, and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to make a list of state and local critical facilities and directs all state agencies to consider this list in their capital and climate resilience planning, especially in floodplains or flood-prone areas.

## Buildings and Infrastructure

- Directs the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), in the next Comprehensive Energy Strategy, to identify strategies to provide for more affordable heating and cooling for residents and businesses, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from residential and commercial buildings and industrial processes, and improve the resilience of the state's energy sector to extreme weather events, fuel commodity price spikes, and other disruptions.
- Directs the building inspector from the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to make sure Connecticut's buildings are constructed to be energy efficient and climate resilient through adoption of the 2021 international codes and ensuring reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change, including the state sea level rise scenario, are core considerations when amending and adopting the State Building Code.
- Directs state agencies to strengthen interim targets under the GreenerGov CT - Lead by Example Initiative in order to meet the state government goal of 45% emissions reduction by 2030 called for in Governor Lamont's [Executive Order No. 1](#). Interim targets include implementing the following across state agencies: organics/food waste diversion, purchase

100% zero carbon electricity, lease zero emission light-duty vehicles, plan for retrofit and new construction zero carbon heating and cooling, divest buildings, deploy solar, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from state buildings.

- Directs DEEP to establish appliance standards that promote energy conservation and efficiency, provided that the subject appliances remain cost-effective for consumers who purchase and use them.

## Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)

### Connecticut Equity Lens

**Equity starts by recognizing that there are disparities and inequities in living conditions.** Some communities lack resources, lack political power, lack access to higher education, or have poor health outcomes. These examples place low-income communities and many communities of color at greater risk while limiting their capacity to adapt. Equity based planning takes these disparities into account.

## How does equity relate to climate change?

The concept of equity has a number of components that are related to climate change adaptation and mitigation:

- We are concerned about the distribution of Benefits and Burdens (distributive equity).
- Process and the need to ensure that the GC3 provides meaningful opportunities to participate and to have perspectives heard and considered (procedural equity).
- The fact that some communities are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (contextual equity).
- Concerns that mitigation and adaptation strategies must aim to achieve racial and economic justice (corrective equity).

### Distributive Equity (or Equitable Outcomes)

Equitable mitigation and adaptation strategies place the most vulnerable communities at the forefront. Such strategies would provide our most vulnerable communities with work opportunities and quality-of-life benefits. Procedural Equity (or Equitable Planning) Equitable mitigation and adaptation strategies must be planned in partnership with low-income communities and communities of color. Contextual Equity Equitable mitigation and adaptation strategies consider that low-income communities and communities of color are often more vulnerable to climate change, and the development of mitigation and adaptation strategies must take into account the special mapping of these vulnerabilities. Corrective Equity Equitable mitigation and adaptation strategies would provide communities with clear processes to hold the state accountable to its commitments to pursue equity.

**The areas of focus should include necessary resources or basic necessities for all humans:**

- Safe Air
- Safe Water
- Safe Food
- Safe Shelter
- Affordable Access to energy for heating and lighting.
- Opportunity to earn a decent living wage.
- Equal Access to education for our youth.
- Workforce training, adult education, continued education such as college or secondary education options.
- Access to safe accessible transportation.
- Many of our people don't have all of their basic needs met in our state.

**Some of the key principles that flow from an equity lens include:**

- Inclusion in all aspects of the process -- must be inclusive, offering opportunities for meaningful participation.
- The goals of any climate action plan just include racial and economic justice.
- The benefits of a transition must be distributed equitably.
- No community should be left behind: any plan must include pollution reduction in legacy communities, benefits at the community level, access to affordable energy, health monitoring, infrastructure that can withstand floods and storms, accessible housing for people who have been displaced, maintaining and protecting water resources.
- Plans must assess cumulative impacts in order to understand which communities are most vulnerable to climate change.

## **Distributive Equity**

Placing the most vulnerable communities at the forefront; ensuring that the distribution of the benefits and burdens of climate change mitigation and adaptation are equitably distributed. Equitable sharing of environmental impacts by a community can be achieved by ensuring no one subset of people or socio-economic groups bears a heavier burden. Equitable environmental policies and laws strive to ensure that no one group of communities bears a larger, unfair share of harmful effects from pollution or environmental hazards. These policies and laws should aspire to offer support to more vulnerable communities, as measured by the social determinants of health, and ensure that they do not accidentally bear an unfair share of the cost of the work which needs to occur. Connecticut's climate mitigation and adaptation strategies should ensure that benefits and burdens are not unfairly allocated and focus on benefiting low-income communities of color, Native American tribes and nations, and low-income populations in rural Connecticut, among other vulnerable communities.

## **Contextual Equity**

Assessing the vulnerabilities of communities across Connecticut to climate change, due to

the legacy of racial and income inequality and other factors. Connecticut has an unfortunate expanding affordability gap. When it comes to energy and transportation, for example, the state's low-income population is stuck in a state of disparity with over 400,000 households unable to pay their electric bills and keep their heat on. It is critical to identify the special patterns of vulnerability to climate change stresses to provide guidance on strategies that will work and on indicators that can be used to measure vulnerability and performance over time. Low-income communities are busy struggling to survive and often work more than one job or have other pressing responsibilities. Many low-income families are dealing with serious medical issues, housing displacement, or lack of safe affordable housing, and are impacted by general lack of resources.

## Procedural Equity

Planning in partnership with low-income communities and communities of color. An equitable approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation requires the government to meaningfully partner with low-income communities and communities of color. The state must co-produce its plans with those communities. Otherwise, its plans will not be equitable. Far too often, low-income communities and communities of color are not at the table to advocate for their needs. Unfortunately, and historically most decisions are made by affluent communities and therefore result in resources being allocated to those affluent communities or affiliated communities. As other jurisdictions have found, partnership with communities has led to specific mitigation and adaptation strategies that work.

## Corrective Equity

Providing communities with clear processes to hold the state accountable to its commitments to pursue equity. Because vulnerable communities often lack traditional forms of economic and political clout, the state must create processes that allow those communities to hold public leaders accountable. Equitable climate mitigation and adaptation strategies would consist of clear processes that (a) allow the state to check on its progress towards its goals and (b) allow communities to hold the state accountable.



Leticia Colon de Mejias and  
Lt. Governor Susan Bysciewicz  
August 2022



Engelman Lado, and Leticia with Warren  
County North Carolina Civil Rights leadership  
team at America's Historic Environmental  
Justice Civil Rights bill signing Sept 24 2022



CT State Senator Doug  
McCrory- 2nd District, and  
EFA Ex. Director and co-  
founder Leticia at LIHEAP press  
conference, CT Capitol 2022



# Connecticut's Energy Affordability Gap

Connecticut's home energy costs continue to pose a crushing burden to low-income residents of the state. Particularly for households with incomes in "Deep Poverty," home energy costs threaten not only the ability of Connecticut households to retain access to energy services, but also threaten access to housing, food, medical care, and other necessities of life. The Home Energy Affordability Gap in Connecticut leaves an aggregate Gap substantially higher than available assistance resources. The size of the Affordability Gap indicates the extent of the home energy affordability crisis in Connecticut. Home energy unaffordability is a statewide phenomenon. It affects areas of the state both rural and urban. It affects areas of the state both North and South, East and West. The discussion below continues a series of annual reports examining home energy affordability in Connecticut. The Home Energy Affordability Gap measures the dollar amount by which actual home energy bills exceed affordable home energy bills. In this respect, "affordability" is examined in terms of home energy burdens, and bills as a percentage of income. For example, if a Connecticut household has an annual income of \$12,000 and an annual home energy bill of that household has a home energy burden of 25% ( $\$3,000 / \$12,000 = 0.25$ ). An affordable home energy burden is set at 6%.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/state-leaders-discuss-allocation-of-funds-to-help-rising-energy-costs/ar-AA11fjDf>

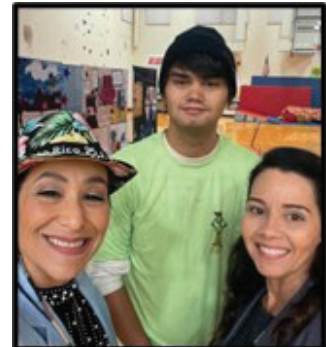
<https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/state-leaders-homeowners-look-ahead-to-high-home-heating-costs-this-winter/2861549/>



April 2022, Rawson Elementary School: Hartford. Children rush the stage to meet Leticia Colon de Mejias and "Dinero, the Hero" from her story.



May 2022: Killingly Elementary School Students meet "Dinero the Hero"

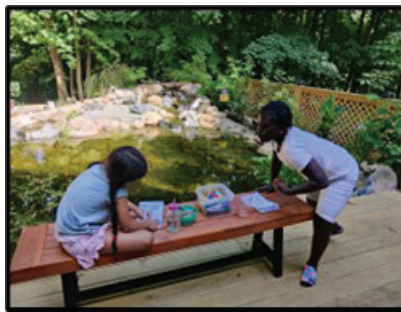


October 2022, Leticia Colon de Mejias and Gabriel.

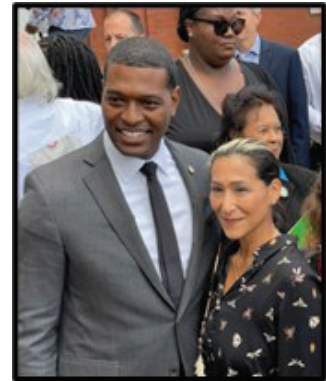
# Cradle to Career Pathways



\*Students about their Superpowers, for Hispanic Heritage Month, Maria Sanchez Elementary School - Hartford CT



Green Eco Warriors Summer Camp - Learning about the Water and Energy Nexus, Windsor, CT July 2022



Michael S. Regan, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Leticia Colon de Mejias: Warren County, NC, Saturday, September 24, 2022

*Cradle to Career approaches are deeply needed in Connecticut's **37 Environmental Justice Communities**. This need is demonstrated by the high unemployment rates, and lack of minority representation in Clean Energy workers, and by the lack of minorities connected to solar, resilient housing, or Clean Energy careers.*

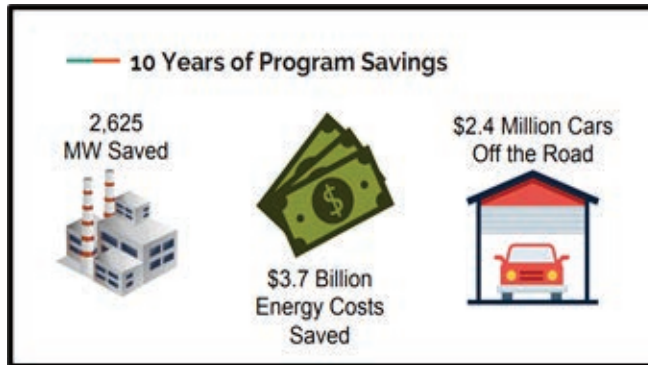
Community engagement is critical to increasing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in our energy and environmental plans. This includes Clean Energy plans and climate resilience planning.

How can one be included if they are unaware of the planning or reasons for the Clean Energy transition. EFA is keenly focused on ensuring that communities have inclusive opportunities to connect to education and Clean Energy benefits. We connect participants and their families to resilience. We partner with local nonprofits such as Green Eco Warriors, a minority-operated nonprofit, that directly supports familial education and a deeper understanding of the interconnection between our energy plans and our environment and individual household budgets as well as larger economies of scale.

- [Dinero Learns to Save Energy](#) , [Advocating for Change – Efficiency For All](#), and [Green Eco Warriors](#)
- Free on-line learning supports: [Story Time with Leticia Colon de Mejias](#) | [Green Eco Warriors](#)

## Become a Warrior for a Brighter Tomorrow Today!

# State of Connecticut Energy Efficiency Board - Ten Years of Saving



## Efficiency Based Economic Gains

Beyond the statewide economic gains shown in the graphic to the left, M=POWER helps participants master basic economic skills, such as managing a bank account, improving credit score and lowering credit debt. These are basic skills which are required for success.

## Supporting At-Risk Populations

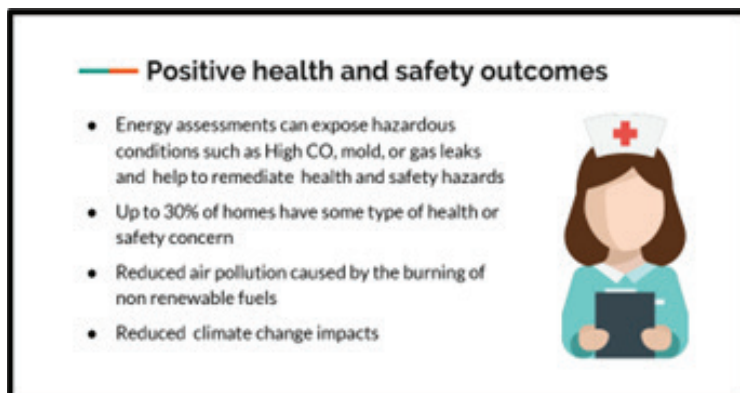
Connecticut residents still continue to struggle with high energy prices. Financially vulnerable, disabled, and aging populations are more vulnerable to the increasing cost of energy. Efficiency lowers energy burdens and closes the affordability gap. EE solves cumulative issues, while creating resilience.

- 400,000 households in Connecticut cannot afford their energy.
- \*At-risk populations spend up to 45% of their income on energy costs. This percentage will continue to increase based on the anticipated increases in the cost of energy.
- Reducing energy costs allows for spending on critical items like food, medicine, and education.
- Energy Efficiency reduces the needs for subsidies.

\* <https://www.aceee.org/press-release/2020/09/report-low-income-households-communities-color-face-high-energy-burden>

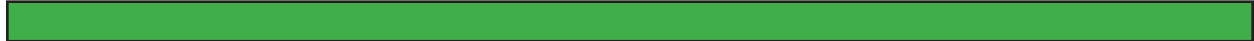
\*\*Subsidizing fossil fuels by paying arrearages or paying for fuel subsidy results in continued dependency and does not solve cumulative environmental justice impacts.

\*\* [Addressing Health and Affordability Challenges for Low-Income Families – Efficiency For All](#)



## Safer Housing and Better Health

EE directly improves CT ratepayers housing. We make housing warmer in the winter, cooler in the summer, and more resilient against the elements. We also solve for indoor home health issues such as gas leaks, lead, mold, high co, and lack of thermal resilience.





# M=POWER

## *M=Powering Communities Energizing Our Future*

**EVERSOURCE**



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