

ReSOURCE: Tom Longstreth, Executive Director

Presentation to House Commerce February 18 2026

ReSOURCE purpose is to create opportunity.

- reuse programs help environment & reduce poverty by finding value in things.
- training programs find value in people.

Construction Workforce Problem -- General Worker shortage:

- lowest unemployment rate New England
- 3rd lowest 50 states
- Demand for skilled construction workers is acute -- workforce down 11% since 2019 despite housing demand

Shortage is likely to get worse

- 20% of the construction workforce undocumented
- 41% of the construction workforce expected to retire by 2031
- Vermont has the lowest birthrate in the nation
- VT retains only 2,000 of 5,000 high school graduates each year
- Not clear how much AI, automation, and off-shoring can help, especially with rehab and weatherization

Who we serve

Youth not succeeding in school. Those with barriers.

Adults who are disconnected from workforce but want to work.

Met 7 trainees in current Construction 101 Intensive: 2 self-described former addicts, 2 women seeking new career, new American, 2 under-employed mid-career seeking new purpose. All lacked critical skills needed to enter skilled trades.

Met 17 of our YB students. Disengaged rural youth—Gone Guys. Asked what about program works, they cite hands-on learning, service –doing good for others, education that feels connected to life, sense of connection and belonging that was missing in high school.

Why our Training Works

Combination of soft and hard skills, service, and wrap around support—e.g. basic set of tools, winter boots and winter clothing, interview skills

Service gives trainees different mindset.

Who Benefits –multiplier and multiple beneficiaries

Trainees, Employers, Families who move into Affordable Housing we build, State of VT (tax revenue)

Size of Impact

Over 550 trainees enrolled in ReSOURCE YouthBuild or Intensives thanks in part to state SLE funding.

Over 700 industry recognized skill certifications awarded.

90% of ReSOURCE's YouthBuild Program trainees are placed into employment.
Average starting wage >\$19/hr

81% of ReSOURCE's Intensive Program trainees are placed into employment.
Average starting wage >\$22/hr.

State Investment

SLE funding at 2M level supported program growth across state. Leveraged private dollars. \$750K and 500K not sufficient to sustain. Cannot support programs entirely with private funding. Reduction in programs will reduce future tax revenue and make it harder to achieve state goals from housing to homelessness and addiction.

Trainee Examples

Hireability client, long-time disconnected workforce, graduated pilot heavy equipment, just hired with Agency of Transportation.

Wx Graduate: entire adult life in prison, placed in hired by Addison Residential Construction Company in July where remains happily employed, building skills, helping VT reduce climate emissions and helping Vermonters stay warmer and waste less energy.

New American--Nigerian Weatherization trainee