



BUILT TO LAST:

Best Practices for Diversity in the Construction Industry

The Massachusetts Casino
Development Experience

PREPARED FOR

The Massachusetts
Gaming Commission

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RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY

Peg Barringer, Partner, FinePoint Associates



FOREWORD

The Governor and Legislature passed into law the Expanded Gaming Act of 2011 with the intent of generating jobs and business opportunities for Massachusetts residents. The legislation had clear priorities of establishing a diverse and skilled workforce, and providing opportunities for minority, women and veteran-owned businesses.

Accordingly, the Gaming Commission early in its inception established as one of its "Core Values" that "We value a diverse workforce and supplier base, and an inclusive culture internally and among our partners in the Massachusetts gaming industry."

This commitment remains a central component of our own operations and of our regulations of the casino licensees.

In Massachusetts, casino developers are legally required to set diversity hiring goals and submit strategic plans for the inclusion of minority, women, and veterans in all phases of casino development. The gaming law also requires specific construction workforce goals for minorities and women.

As part of MGC's effort to enhance diversity in the gaming industry, the MGC prioritized this mandate and established protocols and procedures to ensure compliance and accountability.

We are proud of the results achieved during the construction phase of casino development. It would not have been possible without the steadfast commitment of our licensees, their project diversity teams, and the unyielding efforts and dedication of many stakeholders.

Our agency commissioned this report to capture and share the promising practices that led to enhanced diversity and new opportunities for thousands of Massachusetts residents. This report articulates the tremendous commitment, leadership and innovation required to not only meet, but consistently strive to exceed the requirements of the law, ensuring a diverse and inclusive gaming industry

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jill Lacey-Griffin".

Jill Lacey-Griffin

Director of Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cathy Judd-Stein".

Cathy Judd-Stein

Chair

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The funding for this research project was provided by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

Guidance throughout the project was provided by Jill Lacey Griffin, Director of Workforce, Supplier & Diversity Development.

Coordination support was provided by Crystal Howard, Program Manager of Workforce, Supplier & Diversity Development.

The following stakeholders participated in interviews and generously shared experiences and insights.

Nader Acevedo

Hispanic-American Institute,
Executive Vice President

Chelan Brown

MGM Springfield, Former
Construction Diversity Manager

Francis X Callahan, Jr.

MA Building Trades Council,
President

Maureen Carney

MA AFL-CIO,
Senior Workplace Strategist

Eddie Corbin

City of Springfield Appointee,
Former City Purchasing Director

Lisa Clauson

New England Regional Council
of Carpenters (NERCC),
Strategic Partnerships

Joseph Delaney

MA Gaming Commission (MGC),
Construction Project
Oversight Manager

Emily Earll

Suffolk Construction,
Project Controls Manager

John Fitzpatrick

Commonwealth of MA
Supplier Diversity Office (SDO),
Director, Massachusetts Supplier
Diversity Programs

Dave Fontaine Sr.

Fontaine Brothers Construction,
Owner

Emil Giordano

Turner Construction,
Project Executive

Fiore Grassetti

Pioneer Valley Central Labor
Council/Ironworkers Local 7,
President

Jill Lacey Griffin

MA Gaming Commission (MGC),
Director of Workforce,
Supplier & Diversity Development

Kate Harrison

Northeast Center for
Tradeswomen's Equity (NCTE),
Pipeline Navigator

Nina Incharidi

Ultimate Abatement,
Owner

Beverly Johnson

MA Minority Contractors
Association, President

Ron Marlow

(Former) Commonwealth of
MA Executive Office of Labor
and Workforce Development,
Undersecretary of Workforce
Development

William McAvoy

Commonwealth of MA
Operational Services Division,
Deputy Assistant Secretary

Dr. Susan Moir

Former UMass Boston,
Director of Research; Policygroup
on Tradeswomen's Issues

Reggie Nunnally

Commonwealth of MA
Supplier Diversity Office (SDO),
Former Director

Brian Packer

MGM Springfield, Vice President of
Construction and Development

Charlie Payne

New England Regional Council
of Carpenters (NERCC),
Business Representative

Jennie Peterson

Encore Boston Harbor,
Director of Employment

Jennifer Pinck

Pinck & Co. Inc., President

Mei-Ling Rodriguez

AECOM Tishman,
Diversity Compliance Officer

Jason Rosewell

MGM Springfield,
Vice President of Facilities

Liz Skidmore

New England Regional Council
of Carpenters (NERCC),
Organizer; NCTE, President

Allison Stanton

Turner Construction,
Senior Director of Community
and Citizenship

Bruce Stebbins

MA Gaming Commission (MGC),
Commissioner

Mary Vogel

Building Pathways Inc. (BPI),
Executive Director

Shelley Webster

In Order Business Solutions,
Diversity Consultant

Brooke Woodson

Suffolk Construction,
Director of Trade Partner Diversity

Jessica Yamas

Center for Women and Enterprise
(CWE), Senior Director

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OVERVIEW & SUMMARY

Three casino projects have been developed since the Massachusetts Expanded Gaming Act was signed in late 2011 including Encore Boston Harbor (the largest single private construction project in state history), MGM Springfield and Plainridge Park Casino. The Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) and its licensees have worked diligently during the development of these facilities to maximize access to jobs and business opportunities for women, minorities and veterans.

Their efforts were very successful. In fact, as Jill Lacey Griffin (Director of Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development) points out, “All three projects exceeded the diversity goals in almost all categories and many of the initiatives undertaken will continue to have impact well beyond the completion of the casino projects.”

DIVERSITY CATEGORIES		
Workforce Diversity	Women	Collectively WMV
	Minorities	
	Veterans	
Contracting Diversity	Women Business Enterprise (WBE)	Collectively W/M/VBEs
	Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)	
	Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE)	

This research chronicles the best practices that were utilized to achieve workforce and contractor diversity. MGC’s department of Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development commissioned Peg Barringer, Partner at FinePoint Associates, to complete this study so that others may benefit from what has been learned. The intent of this report is to share strategies that can be used and built upon by future development projects to increase diversity in the construction industry.

The research process involved interviews with 30+ stakeholders. This included representatives from MGC, all three casinos (Encore Boston Harbor, MGM Springfield, Plainridge Park Casino) their major construction companies (Suffolk Construction, AECOM Tishman, Turner Construction, respectively,) building trades

unions and trade union consortiums, worker advocacy and training entities, community representatives, and business advocacy and certification organizations.

One lesson learned...to make real change, it takes a multi-pronged approach, requiring not only supply, but also demand. Attempting to achieve diversity in the construction industry had historically been viewed from a supply approach, but creating demand is essential. It requires diversity goals and hiring diverse workers, but also developing the workforce—ensuring that there are available, qualified, job-ready women, minority and veteran workers to hire. Similarly, with contractors, it’s not just about a commitment to contract with women, minority and veteran owned businesses, but also about finding ways that these often small contractors can fit into a large project, ensuring these companies are certified as W/M/VBEs and building their capacity to bid on and complete jobs. And, essential to all of this is the constant monitoring to ensure that diversity goals are being met and problem solving to address obstacles that come up. It takes an integrated, data-driven supply and demand strategy that engages all the stakeholders in the industry to move the numbers. However, the crucial element for success in this model is to have a designated leader or diversity team from the property owner focusing on implementation and innovation from the beginning.

To achieve diversity in the casino development projects, MGC and its partners created and implemented a comprehensive and robust series of strategies that address elements from all three sides—demand, supply, and monitoring. The Access and Opportunity Committee (AOC), convened by MGC, is the cornerstone of this strategy involving multiple stakeholders in transparent monitoring of progress toward goals and collaborative problem solving. This strategy builds on the foundational work of organizations such as the Policy Group on Tradeswomen Issues (PGTI), the UMass Building Authority, Access and Opportunity Committee, and others.

INTEGRATED DEMAND, SUPPLY & MONITORING STRATEGY

Implemented by MA Gaming Commission and Partners to Increase Diversity in Construction Projects

DEMAND

IMPETUS FOR DEMAND

MA Gaming Commission, implementing the Gaming Act, required diversity plans, goals & regular reporting on goal progress as conditions of the gaming licenses

SPECIFIC DIVERSITY GOALS

Casino owners established specific diversity goals & plans
% W/M/V workers
% of spend with W/M/VBEs

DIVERSE WORKFORCE HIRING AND CONTRACTING PRACTICES

Owners, construction managers, general contractors & subcontractors implemented many effective diversity hiring & contracting practices (Encore/Suffolk, MGM/Tishman, Plainridge/Turner & subs)

- Comprehensive, consistent communication of goals
- Designated diversity officer/team
- Review diversity histories when hiring all contractors
- Data reporting system plus supplemental worker tracking
- Corrective action meetings
- Awards for contractors that exceed diversity goals
- Workforce-specific: Community outreach, job fairs
- Start diverse crews from day one

- Building relationships with unions & training entities; make requests in writing to increase diversity
- Strategies to support & retain diverse workers (tradeswomen lunches, veteran hard hats)
- Contracting Specific*
- Build relationship with contractor certification entities, develop database of relevant W/M/VBEs
- Pre-bid orientation sessions with diverse contractors
- Increase small firm access (small bid packages, payment terms)
- Diversity goals in RFPs

Advocate for Goals

Work to Meet Demand

SUPPLY

WORKER ADVOCACY, RECRUITING, TRAINING & PLACEMENT

Advocacy for Under-Represented

- Policy Group on Tradeswomen's Issues, Black Economic Justice Institute, Community Partners Network, Casino Action Network & more...
- Participate on AOC, collect & distribute info, identify and resolve workforce entry obstacles

Industry Recruitment – Targeted to Build Tradeswomen Pipeline

- Northeast Ctr. for Tradeswomen's Equity, "Build a Life" Campaign (launched with MGC Funding)
- MA Girls in Trades Conferences

Pre-Apprenticeship Training

- Building Pathways, Inc.
- Job readiness training, union entry agreements, relationships

Union Recruiting & Apprenticeship

- Metro Building & Construction Trades Council, NE Regional Council of Carpenters, Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council, MA AFL CIO & More
- Participate on AOC, outreach, work with advocacy & training entities
- Prioritizing women and people of color

CONTRACTOR ADVOCACY, CERTIFICATION, LINK TO OPPORTUNITIES & TRAINING

Advocacy for Under-Represented

- MA Minority Contractors Association, Latino Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic-American Institute & more...
- Participate on AOC, provide demand info, communicate issues with obtaining contracts & resolve obstacles

W/M/V/BE Certification & Link to Opportunities

- MA Supplier Diversity Office
- Greater New England Minority Supplier Diversity Council
- Center for Women Enterprise
- Participate on AOC, targeted outreach, review & certify, identify companies to meet specific demand
- VBE certification added in 2015, MGC funding for additional veteran outreach
- MGC Licensing Department

Contractor Training

- Suffolk Trade Partnership Series Training (construction industry specific training)
- Tishman Technical Assistance

MONITORING: GOAL ACHIEVEMENT & PROBLEM SOLVING

- MGC convened a standing, project level AOC for the MGM and Encore projects, chaired by MGC Director of Workforce, Supplier & Diversity Development (initially chaired by MA Undersecretary of Workforce Development)
- Casino diversity teams report efforts
- Monthly meetings, open to the public, including presentation of detailed data reports showing the amount of women, minority and veteran work hours expended on the job by contractor as well as the amount and percentage of contracts awarded and payments to W/M/VBEs plus reporting on other diversity-supporting activities, analysis of diversity

goal compliance over time paying close attention to High Impact Poor Performers (HIPP), identification of issues and strategizing solutions. Many new ideas and best practices originated from AOC meetings.

- AOC Participants: MGC, casino owner representatives, construction management team representatives, community and business advocacy groups, worker recruitment, training & placement organizations, community representatives, trades union representatives, contractor training & certification organizations.

DEMAND OVERVIEW

The fact that the Expanded Gaming Act made diversity a requirement represents a fundamental best practice. This created the demand for WMV workers and W/M/VBEs needed to promote change in the existing system and cause a departure from usual hiring and contracting practices.

The Gaming Act, through making diversity plans, goals, and quarterly reporting a requirement of the gaming license, provided an indisputable motivation for casino owners to get serious about diversity and make sure their construction teams followed suit. The MGC then implemented monthly reporting during the construction phase through development of the AOC.

The gaming licensees, construction managers, general contractors, and subcontractors developed and implemented many successful diversity hiring and contracting processes. These included practices such as clear and consistent communication of goals throughout the bidding and construction processes, designating a diversity team, reliable data tracking systems, reviewing diversity histories when hiring subs, corrective action meetings when needed, and awards for contractors that exceeded diversity goals. Best practices pertaining specifically to workforce diversity included community outreach and job fairs, building strong relationships with unions, training programs and advocacy groups, and implementing strategies that help support and retain workers such as special hard hats for veterans and tradeswomen lunches. Best practices pertaining specifically to contractor diversity included building relationships with certification entities, hosting pre-bid orientation sessions, and sizing bid packages to increase access for small firms. Additionally, W/M/VBE commitment strategies were required from contractors.

The more specific details and practices regarding the demand strategy are discussed on pages 12-17.

SUPPLY OVERVIEW

Demand is important to lead the drive toward diversity, but there also needs to be a qualified, ready supply of potential WMV workers and W/M/VBEs to meet the demand. Many practices were implemented that contributed to workforce and contractor diversity in the casino projects.

Community and worker advocacy groups played an important role not only promoting the hiring of their constituents and actively participating at AOC meetings, but also identifying issues and resolving obstacles that

inhibited the job-readiness and sustainability of potential workers as well as contractor-based obstacles to hiring and retaining diverse workers.

Due to the continuing struggle for contractors to meet goals for tradeswomen, extra attention was paid to developing new solutions. MGC provided funding to launch the “Build a Life That Works” public outreach campaign to inform women about opportunities within the trades and provide them with career navigation assistance. A representative from Encore Boston Harbor in partnership with a representative from Minuteman Vocational High School, PGTI and union representatives founded Massachusetts Girls in Trades (MAGIT), that among other things, hosts statewide conferences to inform, encourage and support young women interested in careers in the building trades.

To effectively build the pipeline of workers especially in low-income communities, Building Pathways, Inc (BPI) provided pre-apprenticeship training and developed entry agreements with local unions. Representatives of trades union consortiums actively participated on the AOC and worked to recruit diverse members through community outreach, and taking part in MAGIT and “Build a Life” events.

While casino diversity teams guided the effort, contractor advocacy and certification entities significantly contributed by regularly attending AOC meetings, identifying relevant contractors and certifying W/M/VBEs. Certification agencies coordinated with casino construction teams to ascertain the specific needs for contractors and identify W/M/VBEs that could fill these needs.

While WBE and MBE certification processes were in place prior to the onset of the casino projects, there was no local entity certifying VBEs. When the Plainridge project was initiated in 2014, MGC provided assistance to help qualify veteran businesses. Then in 2015, the MA Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) created a state certification process for VBEs and MGC provided funding for additional outreach to veterans.

Suffolk Construction’s Trade Partnership Series provided industry specific training targeted to minority and women contractors, which also merits mention as a best practice that has improved the supply of diverse contractors.

The more specific details and practices regarding the supply strategy are discussed on pages 18-24.

MONITORING OVERVIEW

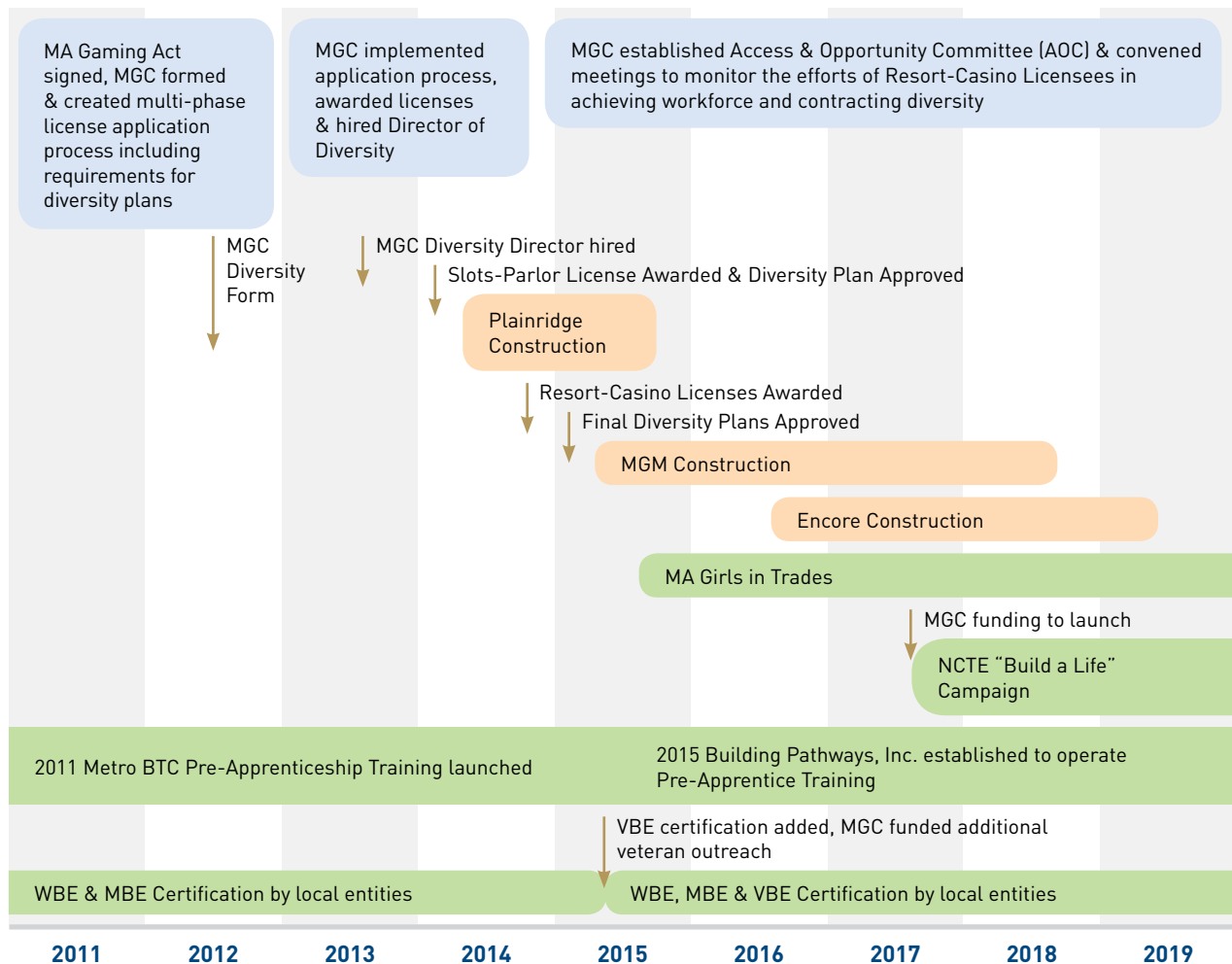
Aside from making diversity integral to the approval and maintenance of the gaming licenses, the most impactful best practice was instituting the AOC data-driven process to monitor progress and address issues. This multi-stakeholder collaboration included representatives from MGC, the casino licensees and construction management teams, local building trades unions, workforce advocacy and training organizations, community representatives and supplier advocacy and certification organizations.

At each meeting, representatives of the casino licensee/ construction management team presented detailed data reports illustrating the number and percentage of women, minority and veteran work hours expended on the job as

well as the amount and percentage of contracts awarded and payments made to W/M/VBE subcontractors. AOC committee members evaluated the numbers, comparing current month to project to date numbers to identify trends, employing the High Impact Poor Performance (HIPP) analysis method introduced by PGTI, while asking questions and discussing problems. (HIPP focuses attention on contractors with the most work hours but lowest diversity achievement on the project.) When issues were identified, AOC members often worked collectively to develop potential action steps to address the situation. The casino teams also used this time to present other diversity-supporting activities being undertaken.

The more specific details and practices regarding the monitoring strategy are discussed on pages 25-27.

TIMELINE



*Timing shown is approximate.

Governor Patrick Deval named the first Access and Opportunity Committee for the UMass Boston Project Labor Agreement around 2006. The first project met Boston goals of 10% women, 25% minority and 50% residents. MGC used this as a model.

THE EXPANDED GAMING ACT AND MASSACHUSETTS GAMING COMMISSION

BACKGROUND

On November 22, 2011, Governor Deval Patrick signed the Expanded Gaming Act. The Massachusetts Gaming Commission was established to implement this Act. MGC works with licensees, their contractors, vendors, and community leaders to ensure that the state's new expanded gaming industry is inclusive and provides opportunities that reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth. At the initial MGC Diversity Forum (9.19.12), Stephen Crosby (former MGC Chairman) noted, "With this Commission we have the opportunity to...incorporate, in a really fundamental and transformative way, the values of diversity and inclusion into what we are doing."

The Gaming Act prioritizes equal access and opportunity by making diversity plans an integral part of the gaming license. The importance of diversity is reinforced throughout the licensing process administered by MGC.

- Applicants must formulate diversity plans with specific goals and strategies to be eligible for consideration for a gaming license.
- Diversity plans are presented for public comment and evaluated as part of the process to determine if a license will be granted.
- Implementation of diversity plans is a condition of the gaming license once it is granted.

The required submission of quarterly detailed statistical reports showing the achievement progress against goals is also a condition of the license. Another related condition requires licensees to notify each labor union or representative of workers involved in collective bargaining agreements about the diversity goals and commitments.

The diversity plans must address both contracting and workforce diversity including:

1. An affirmative marketing program with specific goals for the utilization of W/M/VBEs during the design, construction and operation of the gaming establishment, and
2. An affirmative action program with specific goals for utilization of WMV workers in the construction of the gaming establishment. The goals must be equal to or exceed the goals specified for state construction contracts and state-assisted construction contracts (i.e., 15.3% for minorities, 6.9% for women). At that time, there were no existing state construction goals for veterans and licensees were directed to set their own veteran tradesworker goals.

"With this Commission we have the opportunity to...incorporate, in a really fundamental and transformative way, the values of diversity and inclusion into what we are doing."

Steve Crosby

OVERVIEW OF CASINO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

	Encore Boston Harbor	MGM Springfield	Plainridge Park
Gaming License Type	Resort-Casino	Resort-Casino	Slots Parlor
Development Cost	\$2.4 Billion	\$960 Million	\$250 Million
General Contractor/ Construction Manager	Suffolk Construction	AECOM Tishman	Turner Construction
Groundbreaking	2016 (August)	2015 (March)	2014 (March)
Opening	2019 (June)	2018 (August)	2015 (June)



DIVERSITY BEST PRACTICES: DETAIL

As discussed in the “Summary” of this report, MGC and its partners implemented an integrated demand, supply and monitoring strategy to achieve diversity in the casino development projects. Constant monitoring and collaborative problem solving by the multi-stakeholder AOC was central to the success of this strategy.

Constant monitoring and collaborative problem solving by the multi-stakeholder AOC was central to the success of this strategy.

The remainder of this report contains descriptions of the practices employed and lessons learned.

The best practices cited in this report were utilized, adapted and/or invented by the wide host of stakeholder partners involved with the casino construction projects (often in collaboration). Many of these best practices

build on the previous work of several entities engaged in this arena for many years. This includes the Policy Group on Tradeswomen Issues (PGTI) that has been diligently creating, collecting and disseminating best practices to increase women in the trades and University of Massachusetts Boston that had successful outcomes using an Access and Opportunity Committee process with campus construction projects. (www.policygroupontradeswomen.org)



INTEGRATED DEMAND, SUPPLY, AND MONITORING STRATEGY



DEMAND STRATEGY PRACTICES

IMPETUS FOR DEMAND

The Gaming Act and MGC made diversity a requirement, creating an impetus for demand. The fundamental best practice was making diversity a requirement. MGC made diversity an important part of the selection process, with goals and diversity plans a condition of the gaming licenses. Additionally, the Gaming Act required submission of periodic detailed data reports on goal achievement.

Frank Callahan (MA Building Trades Council, President) stated that the Massachusetts' Building Trades Unions successfully lobbied for inclusion of diversity goals in the original casino legislation and inserted hiring requirements in the Project Labor Agreements (PLA).

The lesson...“Create diversity requirements for construction projects to drive demand AND ensure compliance with concrete oversight activities like an AOC.”

Making diversity a requirement of the casino construction projects created a demand for WMV workers and for W/M/VBEs. Demand is needed to promote change in the existing system. Otherwise, contractors would likely hire employees from the most common sources and use the same subcontractors they have used in the past, and the construction industry would remain unchanged with regard to diversity. Without demand, entities that work on the supply side, aiming to increase and improve the pool of WMV workers and W/M/VBEs, have much less chance of being successful. The demand for diverse construction workers facilitated the recruitment and training of new diverse workers because there were jobs to place them into. The requirement for utilizing W/M/VBEs encourages contractors to find ways to work with these typically smaller and less well-known subcontractors and provided small firms with opportunities to grow their business.

Jennifer Pinck (Pinck & Co, Plainridge Oversight Consultant) said, “It was well established by MGC that the benefits of the Gaming Act should extend to all people. MGC was upfront and vocal about it from the beginning.” Ron Marlow (Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and first AOC Chair) said, “While the MGC is not the owner or operator of the casinos, they took their public steward role very seriously to ensure that the legislation was implemented as faithfully as possible—from Chairman Crosby and all the commissioners on down.”

SPECIFIC DIVERSITY GOALS

The owners of casinos formulated plans with specific numeric goals. This included explicit goals for WMV workers expressed as percentages of the total workforce, and goals for W/M/VBE contracting expressed in percentages of total contract amount versus total spend and actual dollars paid out.

Jill Lacey Griffin (MGC, AOC Chair) said, “Goals do create an impetus for demand, but alone don’t always achieve results. What was vital to this process was ensuring effective strategies were in place.”

Each casino created detailed strategic plans for achieving diversity goals. Then, their dedicated diversity teams implemented those plans and focused on the outcomes.

Diversity requirements have more commonly been applied to publicly-owned/funded projects. The casino projects are privately owned and therefore fall into a different category. These projects are publicly-authorized private projects and, in this case, the Gaming Act made it possible for MGC to make diversity plans part of the application selection process and a condition required for a gaming license. The impetus for diversity demand can also come from private projects that are socially-motivated to increase diversity in the construction industry; these are diversity-responsible private projects. The New England Regional Council of Carpenters (NERCC) is actively trying to encourage more private entities to establish diversity goals. Lisa Clauson (NERCC) says she often holds up the example of the MGC and the MGM project when trying to promote this idea in Western Massachusetts. Smith College recently adopted diversity goals for the construction of their new Neilson Library.

EFFECTIVE DIVERSE HIRING & CONTRACTING PRACTICES

Motivated to achieve the established goals, the owners, construction managers, general contractors, and subcontractors developed and implemented many successful diversity hiring and contracting practices. Below are examples of many practices that were effective.

Communicate diversity goals widely and make sure everyone understands the reporting requirements from the beginning. This includes all personnel in the construction management team, potential bidders, subcontractors, trades unions, community, advocacy organizations, etc.

Top down and bottom up, everyone should be aware of diversity goals. The Encore/Suffolk Team said that strong communication is key. Emily Earll (Suffolk, Project Controls Manager) said, “MGC, Encore, and Suffolk set the tone that they were serious about diversity and there was a culture shift on the project from top down along with a desire to make it happen. It was communicated down to the estimating team, site superintendents, project managers, accountants—everyone was made a part of diversity.”

The Encore/Suffolk team met with every single union prior to construction to discuss how many workers in various trades will be needed and their expectation for recruiting and utilizing women, minority & veterans. They also made sure to meet with union training directors and business agents because they found that these parties were not always actively coordinating with each other.

Representatives from the MGM and Plainridge projects echoed similar feelings about the importance of clear communication regarding diversity goals and reporting. Jason Rosewell (MGM, Vice President of Facilities) who was the Director of Pre Construction for the project at the time, cited how important it was to have kickoff meetings with large subcontractors including the field superintendents because, “The people cutting the checks are different from those working in the field.”

Jennifer Pinck (Pinck & Co, Plainridge Oversight Consultant) advises, “Make sure all of the subcontractors understand the reporting requirements from the beginning—you can’t spring it on them afterwards.”

Dave Fontaine, Sr. (Fontaine Bros, Inc, general contractor for a portion of MGM) recalled, “Before we hired any subs, we went over all of the reporting that would have to be done in connection with the job. It was a learning process for all of us.”

“Make sure all of the subcontractors understand the reporting requirements from the beginning—you can’t spring it on them afterwards.”
Jennifer Pinck

Designate a diversity compliance officer/team. The casino projects benefited from having designated diversity teams. The lesson...the owner and construction

management team/general contractor should form a strong, dedicated, experienced diversity team that meets regularly and reviews performance numbers internally. Subcontractors should have someone designated to prepare the required diversity data reports.

For example, representatives of Encore and Suffolk Construction, along with their Diversity Consultant, met every week for 3 years. They reviewed the diversity numbers internally, had rigorous conversations, took actions to address contractor issues, and communicated future plans for achieving diversity. Together, they prepared reports for the AOC.

Review diversity histories when hiring all contractors.

Requesting and reviewing information about how general contractors and subcontractors have performed in the past with regard to workforce and supplier diversity can signal the need for addressing issues before contractors start work.

Turner Construction (Plainridge project) clearly believes it is important to pay attention to subcontractor histories. Turner created and maintained their own database, by regularly obtaining data from the City of Boston Residents Job Policy Office and other sources, in order to inform their subcontracting decisions.

Require contractors to submit diversity plans. Just as important as contractor diversity histories, are the current strategies on how a contractor plans to achieve diversity goals on the project. Both MGM and Encore, with their diversity teams, required contractors and subcontractors to submit a MWBE Commitment Strategy describing the diverse trade partners they planned to work with to achieve their business diversity goals.

Establish a data tracking system including weekly reports showing diverse worker hours and contractor utilization *plus* supplement with other tracking methods.

All general contractors and subcontractors prepared timely reports so that data for the entire project could be compiled, reviewed internally and reported to the AOC. Supplemental data was also collected. Construction management teams for all of the casino projects cautioned that payroll reports can lag 2 to 4 weeks and therefore it can take quite a while to discover if there is a problem with low workforce diversity numbers. Supplemental information from turnstiles or other job site screening can be helpful to monitor for early warning signs.

The MGM/AECOM Tishman team used data from electronic screening and site superintendent “walk-arounds” to help supplement information about workforce diversity. The Encore/Suffolk team used

entry turnstile data to do regular checks on diversity numbers and also monitor the retention of tradeswomen. The data allowed them to see who was on site last week but not on site this week and then look into the circumstances if appropriate. This effectively discouraged “checkerboarding”, a term that refers to the practice of moving women and people of color from job site to job site. Dr. Susan Moir, the former Director of Research at UMass Boston, explained that this practice impairs skill development because new tradesworkers don’t receive the type of consistent training that occurs when remaining on the same crew.

Hold corrective action meetings with all key players to examine issues and ensure action steps are taken if diversity performance is below expectations. This best practice was implemented by both Encore and MGM.

The Encore/Suffolk team aggressively used corrective action meetings to keep the diversity goals on track throughout the construction process. These meetings included the subcontractor, diversity team, construction management team, union business agent and, as necessary, senior company executives from MGC, Encore and Suffolk. For example, later in the project when women worker percentages were not getting to the target goal of 6.9%, the Encore/Suffolk team held close to 30 corrective action meetings within two weeks. Within 2 months, the numbers rose and exceeded the goal.

Recognize and reward contractors for meeting or exceeding diversity goals. Both MGM and Encore recognized high performing contractors. This “carrot approach” turned out to be an effective motivational tool—contractors were surprisingly interested in being recognized.

In the MGM project, awards were given at the end of the project. MGM honored ten contractors including Ultimate Abatement (a small women-owned business, highlighted later in this report, that exceeded goals for tradeswomen.)

Encore had a quarterly “Diversity Recognition Program.” They provided the award winners with a certificate of achievement, dining gift cards, an on-site team lunch and entry into an annual drawing raffle. One of the companies recognized, Titan Roofing, exceeded workforce goals in all three categories (women, minority and veterans). Another award winner, J. Derenzo, which did offsite road improvements, achieved very high numbers for tradeswomen, even though the site work involved trades with traditionally very low women representation in Boston.



Titan Roofing Diversity Recognition Award

WORKFORCE SPECIFIC PRACTICES

Conduct Community outreach, host job fairs, etc. The casino licensee/construction teams found it effective to partner with unions for outreach to community organizations and the community at large about upcoming preapprentice and union apprenticeship program application periods and jobs in order to publicize potential careers in construction and potential opportunities to work on the site.

Encore conducted a significant amount of outreach including many meetings with community organizations and advocacy groups, as well as co-hosting job fairs with unions to provide opportunities for people to learn about career paths in the construction industry. A large event in Everett in 2015 attracted over 800 people.

MGM facilitated the creation of a new community consortium—the **Community Partners Network (CPN)**—specifically focused on the casino project. MGM provided financial and staff support for this coalition (comprised of 19 community organizations and representatives from local building trades unions and MGM) to play a key role in identifying women, minorities and veterans who wanted to work. It turned out that many potential workers were not “union-ready” and the CPN took on the broader responsibility of determining the issues and identifying appropriate services. Typical barriers to employment included lack of High School Diploma/GED, drivers license, job-readiness skills, and childcare. The CPN had regular meetings, identified issues and referred individuals for employment. When needed, CPN member organizations provided help with the cost of tools and union entry fees. At the request of the CPN, some unions agreed to break from their usual once or twice per year entry schedule and accept members out of cycle. According to Chelan Brown, (MGM, Construction Diversity Manager) “The CPN broke down many barriers. Community organizations and unions worked together in a way they never had before.”

“The CPN broke down many barriers. Community organizations and unions worked together in a way they never had before.”

Chelan Brown

Start with diverse crews from day one. Allison Stanton (Turner Construction, Senior Director of Community and Citizenship) emphasized how important it is for contractors/subcontractors to show up with diverse crews from the very first day on the job site. “You have to have these conversations ahead of time. If contractors show up with non-diverse crews, action should be taken immediately because it can be very hard to catch up if they fall behind.”

“If contractors show up with non-diverse crews, action should be taken immediately because it can be very hard to catch up if they fall behind.”

Allison Stanton

Build relationships with unions and training entities; make requests in writing to increase diversity. The Encore/Suffolk team representatives agreed, “Union involvement was huge. Many unions stepped out of their comfort zone. We had a lot of positive engagement and were impressed by their willingness to break from their usual procedures. Our relationship with union business agents allowed us to pick up the phone and say we have someone from Building Pathways or a vocational school and ask them to accept them. A referral with a job attached had a strong influence.”

Shelley Webster, (In Order Business Solutions, Diversity Consultant with Suffolk; Encore Boston Harbor project) an MBE herself, noted, “It’s important to have experienced people on the diversity team that can understand the business component, gain respect of the unions and know when to push and when not to.”

Mei Ling Rodriguez (AECOM Tishman, Diversity Compliance Officer; MGM Springfield Project) described

being in constant communication with the unions—formal monthly meetings as well as many less formal meetings in between. Rodriguez said the unions were pushed to work harder, “They have a membership and are obliged to that dues-paying membership to undertake certain duties but we were asking them to do more—go out and get more women and minority members, and start tracking veterans.”

Similarly, the contractors were pushed to do better, and not continue to operate with non-diverse core crews and exert only minimal effort communicating their diversity needs to union halls. One key principle that was shared throughout the AOC is “Lead from where you are.” So instead of pointing fingers, each stakeholder would exert maximum effort to do what they had control over, whether hiring diverse workers (contractors), or supplying diverse workers (unions & apprenticeships).

A major lesson learned during the course of the casino project...Communicate with unions and apprenticeship programs in writing to encourage acceptance of new diverse members.

Companies were advised to communicate with unions in writing about the demand for diverse workers and, if necessary, request them to increase diverse union membership in order to reach diversity goals. In some instances, when there were problems, contractors blamed unions saying they couldn’t get diverse workers and unions claimed they didn’t know. Written communication helped to clarify.

One of the many best practices that arose from the AOC meetings and was used widely during the Encore project was the “standard letter”. In the case of any corrective action meetings where diverse worker numbers were too low, subcontractors were asked to send a letter to the apprenticeship director and trustees asking what resources were being devoted to getting more WMV workers in the trade and request more action be taken. The letter was pre-written and the company would only have to put it on their letterhead and sign it. Basically, the letter would communicate their plight—if you can’t send me the workers I need, what are you doing to fix it? Liz Skidmore (NERCC, Organizer) emphasized that the key idea here was to bring in not only the Business Agents, but also the apprenticeship structure, the entity that had overarching responsibility for meeting supply.

Similarly, Dr. Moir (PGTI) said, “Admittance to apprenticeship programs is a potential hole in the pipeline” and suggested “Companies should

communicate directly with the Trustees of the joint apprenticeship programs about the need to accept women and people of color.”

Employ strategies to support & retain diverse workers (e.g., tradeswomen lunches, veterans hard hats). One effort that aided in fellowship building and awareness of diverse workers on the project was to ensure practices were in place that aided to support and retain tradespeople. The practice of hosting *Tradeswomen Lunches* developed as a result of a corrective action meeting with an electrical subcontractor that was experiencing difficulty retaining tradeswomen on the Encore job.



Tradeswomen Lunch

The Tradeswomen Lunches, held monthly in various locations on the Encore Boston Harbor construction site, helped address isolation issues for female workers on such a huge site. Women shared struggles, supported each other, more experienced women talked to the newer women, and overall retention was increased. Over the course of the lunches, the women also became more comfortable approaching the Encore/Suffolk team about issues like struggling with the women’s bathrooms being located further away than those for men. The monthly lunches started in January 2018 and hosted an average of 75 women each month until just prior to opening. The final Tradeswomen Tuesday took place in April 2019.

Brooke Woodson (Suffolk, Director of Trade Partner Diversity) remarked, “We’re told this project (Encore) employed more women than any other construction project in the history of Massachusetts, even more than the Big Dig. That’s a lot to be proud of.” Liz Skidmore (New England Regional Council of Carpenters, Organizer) backs that sentiment up. “As far as we know, the Encore Project is the single job with the most women in the history of the US!”

“As far as we know, the Encore Project is the single job with the most women in the history of the US!”

Liz Skidmore

The practice of providing *Veteran Hard Hats* was developed in response to difficulty getting veterans to self-identify themselves to employers. Prior to the casino developments, it was uncommon for construction projects to have veteran worker goals so counting veterans was new to the industry. It was discovered that some veterans were hesitant to identify themselves because they were concerned about pre-conceived notions pertaining to potential issues, such as PTSD. Encore began offering identified veterans a good-looking “Veteran Hard Hat” adorned with the American flag and company logo. In addition, the Director of Construction for the Encore project, Peter Campo, a veteran himself, began wearing the Veteran Hard Hat. This strategy was successful and many workers were motivated to identify themselves as veterans and consequently could be counted toward diversity goals. In fact, the program was so effective, Encore actually went over their budget for the hard hats.



Tradeswomen Lunch

CONTRACTING-SPECIFIC PRACTICES

Build relationships with contractor certification organizations and develop a database of relevant W/M/VBEs. The general contractors/construction managers for the casino projects used data available from the MA Supplier Diversity Office, (SDO) the Massachusetts Minority Contractors Association (MMCA) and other sources to create specifically relevant databases of certified W/M/VBEs.

Emil Giordano (Turner Construction) remembers working with representatives of SDO to come up with a relevant list of subcontractors for the Plainridge project based on the specific trades that were required. He distributed the list to first tier contractors for consideration as second tier subcontractors, along with reinforcing the project's diversity goals. He also contacted the subcontractors and urged them to be proactive and reach out to the first tier contractors.

Host pre-bid orientation sessions and/or business opportunity fairs with diverse contractors. Encore held a large trade partner event with Suffolk where they invited potential bidders to come and learn about the project and encouraged networking among local W/M/VBEs and other firms. Over 700 business owners attended. They were able to meet with senior estimators from various trades, learn how to get prequalified, and become introduced to potential trade partners.

The event prompted an immediate positive result thanks to the long list of potential prime tier subcontractors and W/M/VBEs that was distributed. One of the attendees, Broco Oil, a VBE and small-scale home oil business, began calling companies on the list and ended up connecting with a contractor that needed to fuel construction equipment on site and also fill a VBE requirement. After that, Broco Oil won contracts with over a dozen other subcontractors to do on-site fueling of their front-end loaders, back hoes, etc. The business has since expanded significantly in equipment and personnel.

The owner of Charter (an MBE Environmental Remediation Firm) attended an event with the Encore environmental team where they shared plans and work scopes, providing businesses a chance to get one-on-one

time with bid decision-makers. Charter ended up winning a multi-million dollar contract.

The MGM/AECOM Tishman team successfully implemented a similar a strategy, finding it particularly effective to host small information sessions focused specifically by scope/trade and urging W/M/VBEs to attend. MGM and AECOM Tishman representatives conducted one-on-one meetings with contractors to explain the scope of upcoming work, the prequalification process, and MGM Springfield's policy on contractors, vendors and purchasing. The scope-specific meetings also helped non-union contractors determine if it would be worthwhile to pursue an agreement with the union.

Representatives from the casino projects said the biggest challenges they faced in achieving contractor diversity were that many of the potential contractors interested in working on the projects were not union-affiliated and/or not certified as W/M/VBEs by one the three local certifying organizations. This led to specific efforts aimed at growing the pool of certified union firms.

Increase access for small firms. Smaller bid packages and cash flow considerations can make it feasible for small firms to participate on large projects. Casino contractors employed strategies that helped increase access for small firms.

For example, Jennifer Pinck (Pinck & Co) said conscious efforts were made to assemble small bid packages for the Plainridge project. Brian Packer (MGM, Vice President of Construction and Development) said, "With our project, that was easy, we had 20 different buildings that had to come down and so many small things to do to get the site ready, we just bought services as we needed them,"

Advertising
for Pre-Bid
Information
Sessions



Learn how your company can be a trade partner on the historic \$1.7 billion Wynn Resort in Everett project by attending this special trade partner information and networking event.

Help Us Build A Stronger Foundation



Union painting and drywall contractors are invited to one-on-one information sessions to learn about opportunities related to the MGM Springfield project. Certified MBE, WBE and VBE contractors are strongly encouraged to attend.

When: Wednesday, August 24
30 minute slots available, 9AM to 3PM

To schedule an appointment, e-mail
construction@mgmsspringfield.com



Nina Incharidi, the owner of Ultimate Abatement, said she had read about the planned MGM casino project in the news but never expected she would get the opportunity to work on it. That changed one day when she got a call from a Tishman representative inviting her to a pre-qualification meeting that changed the trajectory of her business.

Incharidi signed a one-page agreement to sign on with the Building Wreckers Union for the duration of the MGM project. Initially, she was intimidated and concerned, but the fact that she could sign up just for the MGM project persuaded her to try it. In the end, she said, “It turned out to be a really good experience and took my business to the next level.” (After the MGM project was finished, Ultimate decided to sign on with the union permanently.) Ultimate received an original contract for \$250,000 that increased several times during the project to eventually reach over \$1.5 million. Ultimate completed interior demolition and asbestos abatement work in a couple of sites and when they moved on to the Armory building, they brought in an all-female crew. Incharidi said, “the union sent great workers and the women were very capable of doing the job”. MGM presented an award to Ultimate Abatement for the highest percentage of minority workforce hours and highest percentage of women workforce hours achieved by a subcontractor.



Nina Incharidi, Owner of Ultimate Abatement (WBE)

making it possible for smaller firms to bid on the work. Mei-Ling Rodriguez (AECOM Tishman) mentioned that subcontractors often get paid after the general contractor gets paid but AECOM Tishman made it a point to pay the small lower tier subcontractors as quickly as possible to ease cash flow concerns.

SUPPLY STRATEGY PRACTICES

WORKER ADVOCACY, RECRUITMENT, TRAINING & PLACEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

When the casino projects began, the infrastructure for promoting and tracking a diverse construction workforce was much less developed than it was for promoting and tracking the utilization of diverse contractors. While for several years, many types of construction projects tracked contractor utilization, tracking workforce was rare outside of the City of Boston (where there is a specific resident jobs program and requirements). The casino projects helped to develop the construction workforce diversity infrastructure in Massachusetts.

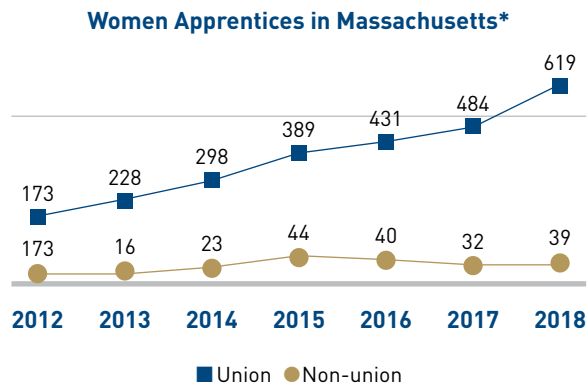
The casino projects helped to develop the construction workforce diversity infrastructure in Massachusetts.

Advocacy for the Under-represented. Advocacy organizations worked to promote access for under-represented groups in the construction industry (women, people of color, veterans). They did this by participating on the AOC, collecting and disseminating information and helping to identify and resolve obstacles to workforce entry.

Participate on the AOC – Organizations such as Policy Group on Tradeswomen’s Issues (PGTI) and Black Economic Justice Institute (BEJI) along with the Casino Action Network, as well as many others, participated regularly at AOC meetings. Representatives worked with other AOC members to review progress reports, discuss issues and develop action steps.

Collect and disseminate information about effective best practices – PGTI is a multi-stakeholder policy group that has met every other month for the last 11 years. Comprised of 75 partners, they have worked together to increase the number of women working in construction trades. For the last few years, PGTI has regularly compiled best practices that evolved from the casino developments and other projects to inform and assist property owners, developers, contractors, trades unions and others. *Finishing the Job: Best Practices for a Diverse Workforce in the Construction Industry* is available at their website (policygroupontradeswomen.org). PGTI has set a goal for 20% tradeswomen by 2020 and there is evidence that great progress has been made. Since

2012, the number of women apprentices in the trades has increased by more than 3.5 times.



*Data provided by the Massachusetts Division of Apprenticeship Standards

Identify and resolve barriers to entry – Community organizations helped identify and address issues that would prevent people from meeting basic work requirements. For potential workers that were not “job-ready” due to barriers such as no GED or drivers license, community organizations referred these individuals to appropriate services. For “job-ready” individuals, community organizations provided assistance with other obstacles. For example, in Western MA, Job Corps paid for the OSHA 10 training that every worker must complete on their own before starting work. The New England Farmworkers Council and Job Corps both provided starter hand tools that workers were required to bring.

Industry Recruitment—Targeted to Build the Tradeswomen Pipeline. Targeted recruitment efforts were initiated to build a pipeline of potential tradeswomen, the most under-represented group in the construction trades. The following two initiatives proved to be very effective.

Northeast Center for Tradeswomen’s Equity (NCTE)
“Build a Life That Works” Campaign – After noting the scarce supply of women in the construction fields was continuing to be a particular challenge for the casino projects and other developers across the Commonwealth, MGC issued a “Request for Proposals” to help address this issue. This spurred the creation of a new partnership (NCTE) and the launch of the “Build a Life that Works” campaign. MGC provided funding and strategic leadership to guide the effort and develop a branded outreach campaign to generate maximum awareness, making women, particularly women of color, more aware of high-paying careers in the building trades and facilitating their entry into these jobs.

NCTE’s principal collaborative groups are long-established partners in increasing women’s access to good jobs in the building trades: the Policy Group on Tradeswomen’s Issues (PGTI), Massachusetts AFL-CIO (MA AFL-CIO), the Building Pathways Inc. (BPI), the Building and Construction Trades of the Metropolitan District (MetroBTC), and the New England Regional Council of Carpenters (NERCC).

The campaign launched in the second half of 2017 and has four key components:

- An impressive website hub – offering lots of information, stories about real tradeswomen, videos pertaining to many different trades and easy forms to fill out for more information.
- A “Pipeline Navigator” staff person – available to answer questions and help guide individuals.
- Tradeswomen Tuesdays – regularly scheduled outreach events in cities connected to the casinos where several tradeswomen provide descriptions of their career path and work life.
- Advertising – fliers, print ads, billboards, radio and social media featuring real tradeswomen and driving traffic to the website. This included subway and bus posters as well as “scrims” (large print media ads on the fences at construction sites.)

The website materials, Tradeswomen Tuesdays and discussions with the Pipeline Navigator helped women understand what working in the construction industry typically entails (e.g., early schedule, physical work, travel) and the distinctions among the various trades so they could make informed decisions. Over two dozen women have been confirmed to have entered union apprenticeship as a result of the Build a Life campaign.

Kate Harrison (NCTE, Pipeline Navigator) said, “Over 1,000 women have connected with us and expressed interest in construction careers.” She noted that the primary job-ready candidates are added to the pipeline database of eligible women. “Job-ready” means they meet basic requirements such as being over 18 years old, holding a drivers license, having a minimum of a High School Diploma or GED, being authorized to work in U.S., having access to adequate child care, and at least 6 months work experience in some field (because construction is not typically a good first job). Women that express an interest but do not meet the basic criteria are referred to services to help them achieve the criteria for the future.



"Build a Life That Works" Advertising

HIGHLIGHTS



Felisha Dillon (on the left) attended the very first Tradeswomen Tuesday. She applied and was accepted to the Sheet Metal Workers apprenticeship program shortly thereafter, making her the first woman to connect with apprenticeship via the "Build A Life" campaign.



Terelle Brown attended a Tradeswomen Tuesday event in December 2017, eager to get started in the trades . After learning about the different trades and programs, she pursued an apprenticeship with Ironworkers Local 7. She was accepted, sworn in, and by August 2018, Brown started work on her first job site as an Ironworker's Apprentice. Since then, she has returned to Tradeswomen Tuesday as a speaker, to share her experiences with women considering building trades careers.



Massachusetts Girls in Trade

Massachusetts Girls in Trades (MAGIT) – MAGIT was founded in 2015 by representatives of Minuteman Vocational High School and Encore to support and encourage female technical education students to pursue careers in the skilled trades. Jennie Peterson (Encore and MAGIT co-founder) explained that, “while this initiative was not likely to have much immediate impact on the need for female construction workers at the Encore casino site (given the age of the students), it was an investment in building the future pipeline of female workers.”

Among other activities, MAGIT holds an annual conference and career fair for female students from nearly 40 technical high schools across the state. The conference events have become so popular they have been split into Western and Eastern MAGIT contingents. Representatives from Encore, construction companies such as Suffolk and AECOM Tishman, MGC, PGTI, and many building trades unions have participated in these events. The young women get to hear from tradeswomen speakers, take workshops and, most importantly, sit in a room with hundreds of other women that are also studying the trades. There is great value for a participant to realize that while she might be the only girl in her electrical class, she is certainly not the only young woman in Massachusetts interested in becoming an electrician.

There is great value for a participant to realize that while she might be the only girl in her electrical class, she is certainly not the only young woman in Massachusetts interested in becoming an electrician.

Pre-Apprenticeship Training. Providing career readiness training targeted to underserved communities while building relationships with trades unions and casino licensees/construction management teams proved an effective approach to building the diverse worker pipeline.

Career readiness training targeted to underserved communities – Building & Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District (MetroBTC) in Boston launched a pre-apprenticeship program in 2011, and in 2015 formed a separate non-profit organization, Building Pathways, Inc., (BPI) to operate the training program. Targeted to low income residents in underserved communities, BPI provides six weeks of career readiness and occupational skills training and works closely with unions to place graduates in jobs and quality apprenticeships. Through its industry-led and worker-



MAGIT Western MA Conference 2019

centered approach, Building Pathways has grown into a nationally recognized model for addressing training and inclusivity in the construction industry. The Building Pathways model has been replicated in other cities in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut.

Relationships with unions and entry arrangements for graduates – BPI has a direct entry agreement with the Elevator Constructors Union to allow their graduates to be considered off-cycle, and a modified entry agreement with IBEW (electricians union) that ensures BPI graduates will at least be given an interview (even if they do not score well on the entry test). If the timing is not right for certain unions that only accept members once per year, BPI tries to get graduates placed in industry-related interim positions with signatory contractors (for example, in the shop as material handlers or drivers) and then when the union application time rolls around, the person has some experience and a sponsor letter from an employer.

Relationships with owners and construction management teams – BPI developed a very good relationship with the Encore/Suffolk team and many BPI graduates were hired for the Encore project. Encore/Suffolk team representatives would call BPI if a contractor was having trouble meeting diversity requirements and BPI would refer someone. Mary Vogel (BPI, Executive Director) said, “Having the owner committed and MGC pushing made all the difference.”

BUILDING PATHWAYS PRE-APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Trainees Per Year	50-60
Graduates	97%
Placed in Jobs	Approx. 80%*

*The balance typically self-selects out of the process.

Trades Union Recruiting & Apprenticeship. Trades unions and trades union consortiums such as the Building & Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District (MetroBTC), an umbrella group of 20 local construction unions, New England Regional Council of Carpenters (NERCC), Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council, MA AFL CIO and others were key contributors to the successful achievement of diversity goals in the casino projects. These entities contributed in several ways:

- Participation on the Access and Opportunity Committee
- Conducting outreach to their membership, in the community, and at vocational schools, and participating in MAGIT and “Build a Life” campaign events
- Active involvement with advocacy groups such as PGTI and NCTE
- Building relationships with organizations that could be pipelines to new members such as pre-apprentice training programs like BPI and creating direct entry agreements to accept graduates
- Ensuring that Trustees of Apprenticeship Training Programs understood the need to accept diverse members

Lisa Clauson (NERCC, Strategic Partnerships) emphasized how important it is to keep constant focus on recruiting, not just for one project, but to constantly get the word out so there will be a large pool of applicants. NERCC was aggressively recruiting diverse members before the MGM project broke ground and has continued after its completion. This includes outreach to community organizations, providing information sessions, talking to existing members, participating in job fairs and working with vocational schools and groups like MAGIT. NERCC is constantly in recruiting mode, particularly focusing on women where there has been more of a lag in membership numbers. Clauson points out, “The funneling process has steep declines from interested persons to actual applicants to union carpenters, so it is necessary to have a large starting pool”.

The MA Building Trades Council stated the overall importance of casino diversity efforts on large development projects. Frank Callahan said, “These large, high-profile projects presented work opportunities on a scale that make it possible for union apprentice programs to take in larger apprenticeship classes, including larger numbers of women and people of color. It also provides existing apprentices with the work hours needed to meet the on-the-job training requirements of their apprenticeships.”

Liz Skidmore (NERCC, Organizer) shared something she has learned over the years. “Prioritizing women in recruitment efforts also leads to an increase in people of color. We typically find that more than 50% of the women coming into the trades are people of color. Recruiting women in the trades also helps to increase racial diversity; in the past when we focused on recruiting minorities, it didn’t result in an increase of women.”

“Prioritizing women in recruitment efforts also leads to an increase in people of color.”

Liz Skidmore



MGM Springfield construction.

HIGHLIGHTS



Prior to becoming an apprentice carpenter, **Katurah Holness** was driving for Uber and homeless. She was couch surfing, living with different friends and family, and trying to pay as many of her bills as she could afford. She had spent over five years in the Air Force at Westover, but after she left the service, she struggled to find steady work. Holness heard about the trades by giving an Uber ride to a union carpenter. He suggested she consider becoming a carpenter. Right after dropping off that ride, Holness drove to the union hall and found out how to apply. Several months later, she was approved to become an apprentice and got hired on the MGM project.



In April of 2019, North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU) presented the prestigious Mark H. Ayers Community Achievement Award to the **Massachusetts Building Trades Council** (MassBTC) along with the **Policy Group on Tradeswomen’s Issues** (PGTI), **Building Pathways Inc.**, and **Massachusetts Girls in Trades**. These groundbreaking Massachusetts organizations were recognized for leading the nation on gender equity and inclusion. *Source: MetroBTC News, April 2019*

CONTRACTOR ADVOCACY, CERTIFICATION, LINK TO OPPORTUNITIES AND TRAINING

Advocacy for Under-Represented. Advocacy organizations such as the Massachusetts Minority Contractors Association (MMCA), Latino Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic-American Institute and others worked to promote the utilization of under-represented business enterprises (women-owned, minority-owned and veteran-owned business enterprises—W/M/VBEs). They did this by participating on the AOC, providing information to W/M/VBEs about the specific demand for services, communicating issues their constituents faced regarding obtaining contracts and working to resolve obstacles. Beverly Johnson (Massachusetts Minority Contractors Association, President,) indicated there was a recurring issue with W/M/VBEs not having the capacity to complete large contracts and noted that the Encore/Suffolk team responded aggressively by breaking jobs into smaller components.

Contractor Certification & Link to Opportunities. Three entities provided certifications recognized by the casino projects—the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO), Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council (GNEMSDC) and the Center for Women and Enterprise (CWE). These organizations participated at AOC meetings, actively encouraged businesses to become certified W/M/VBEs, conducted reviews and determined certifications, met with casino owners/construction management teams to understand what type of the contractors would be needed, conducted targeted outreach to certified companies, and provided information to construction management teams about businesses that could meet demand.

At the time the casino projects started, diversity contracting had a somewhat established infrastructure of advocates and tracking. WBE and MBE certification processes were in place; but the focus on veteran-owned businesses was new. Besides federal contracting, there had not been a history of counting veteran-owned businesses and, even though the casino projects had developed diversity plans with goals for VBEs, there was no local entity providing certification for veteran-owned businesses. In the early days, MGC’s licensing division provided assistance to construction management teams to help qualify veteran businesses. Then in 2015, SDO created a VBE certification process and MGC provided funding for additional outreach and certification to veterans.

The certification entities often worked with construction management teams on the challenging task of trying to find where small businesses could participate and

grow. Reggie Nunnally (then, the SDO director,) recalled working with the Plainridge Diversity Committee on this effort. (Plainridge, the first and smallest of the casino projects, slots-parlor license only, did not have a formal AOC.) Nunnally noted that he worked collaboratively with representatives of Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council and Plainridge/Turner to ascertain the specific types of contractors needed and then identify W/M/VBEs to match those needs.

In the course of this research, many stories came up about small business owners for whom the opportunity to work on one of the casino projects made a significant difference in the trajectory of their enterprise. Examples included a Latino-owned remediation company that won a \$5 million contract, a one-man welding shop that got a contract enabling him to hire 3 more welders, and the woman-owned Ultimate Abatement. (Nina Incharidi is profiled earlier in this report.) She said, “This was the largest job we ever did”...“it took my business to the next level.” Nunnally shared a story about another woman business owner that received a contract to do concrete work and to the great surprise of the construction management team, came in on time and under budget, providing her business with a great track record that would help her get future jobs.

There were also some companies, such as the veteran and minority-owned painting company, S-Cel-O, that received bids for work on both projects. Bruce Stebbins (Commissioner, MGC) recalls that at one AOC meeting, Lamont Clemons (S-Cel-O LLC, Executive Vice Present) mentioned to committee members that the casino opportunities were changing the financial fabric of his family’s future.

“This was the largest job we ever did...it took my business to the next level.”

Nina Incharidi

HIGHLIGHTS



Mitchell Clinton is the owner of CMJ, LLC, a certified MBE and small landscaping and trucking company that worked at the MGM site from its groundbreaking, hauling materials in and off the site.



Reggie Cole is the owner of C&C Contractors, a certified MBE that provided heavy demolition services at the MGM site. He was happy to report that all of the C&C employees were from Springfield.

Contractor Training for Women, Minority and Veteran Owned Businesses. Construction-industry specific training provides a substantial leg up for young businesses trying to successfully bid on jobs. Casinos used such existing programs to aid in reaching their goals, and many businesses benefitted.

The [Suffolk Trade Partnership Series](#) is one such program, designed to provide potential trade partner firms (W/M/VBEs) with valuable insight into doing business with Suffolk Construction, and more importantly, developing their skills to be a successful industry contributor. The free 8-week course offers 2-hour long weekly sessions on risk management, safety, project management, planning and controls, union relationships, access to capital, and more. In addition, Suffolk pairs the graduates with a mentor.

MONITORING STRATEGY PRACTICES

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE (AOC)

The AOC was central to the very robust multi-pronged approach implemented by MGC and its stakeholder partners to achieve diversity in construction of the casinos. Aside from making diversity goals and reporting a requirement of the gaming license, **instituting the AOC process to monitor achievement and collectively solve problems was likely the single-most impactful practice.** Although there were many lessons learned and

best practices invented and implemented along the way, interviews with stakeholders revealed resounding support for the value of the AOC and the difference it made in achieving diversity.

Interviews with stakeholders revealed resounding support for the value of the AOC and the difference it made in achieving diversity.

Liz Skidmore remarked, "A key best practice is the monthly AOC committee meetings—We identified problems, identified solutions—without the space to do that, I think we would have seen the same low diversity numbers we have historically seen in other construction projects. A prime aspect of the AOC is having the public invited. The AOC meetings being public, with accountability to the community, has been a game changer for the work here in Massachusetts."

“We identified problems, identified solutions—without the space to do that, I think we would have seen the same low diversity numbers we have historically seen in other construction projects.”

Liz Skidmore

As they embarked on the task of putting the Gaming Act priorities into action, MGC representatives researched the diversity outcomes of past construction projects. Impressed with the results that University of Massachusetts Boston accomplished with the construction of their science building using an AOC, MGC embraced the concept of an open, multi-stakeholder process. MGC established a project level AOC for the MGM and Encore casino developments—the Resort-Casino Licensees. *[Note: Plainridge Park, a Slots-Parlor Licensee, and much smaller project (about one-tenth the size of Encore,) had a Diversity Committee that provided some similar functions but was not a full-fledged AOC.]*

The AOC, convened by MGC, met 45 times between 2015 and 2019 in either Springfield or Boston during the construction of the MGM and Encore projects. The AOC was initially chaired by Ron Marlow, formerly the Undersecretary of Workforce Development at the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and a staff contributor of much of the diversity language in the Gaming Act. In February 2016, the role of Chair was transferred to Jill Lacey Griffin, the Director of Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development at MGC. The AOC included representatives from MGC, the licensees and construction management teams, local unions, workforce advocacy and training organizations, community members, business advocacy and certification organizations. Membership shifted somewhat over time as the MGM project wound down and meetings were primarily (and then for the last eight months entirely) focused on the Encore project.

At each meeting, the casino owner and construction management team presented detailed data reports illustrating the number and percentage of women, minority and veteran work hours expended on the job as well as the amount and percentage of contracts and payments awarded to W/M/VBEs. Committee members evaluated the numbers, often employing the HIPPP (High Impact Poor Performance*) analysis method, asked



AOC Meeting, 4/10/18

“The AOC meeting is key to the whole system working—it essentially requires licensees to air their laundry in public, run the gauntlet in front of groups that are advocating for diversity—it makes everybody sharpen their pencil a little bit more.”

Joe Delaney

questions and discussed problems. When issues were identified, the AOC often worked collectively to develop actions to address the situation. The casino teams also used this time to present other diversity-supporting activities being undertaken.

Joe Delaney (MGC, Construction Project Oversight Manager) remarked, “The AOC meeting is key to the whole system working—it essentially requires licensees to air their laundry in public, run the gauntlet in front of groups that are advocating for diversity—it makes everybody sharpen their pencil a little bit more.” Folks in the room took a deep dive into the numbers—“Why did this sub only have 3 women on the job this month—what are you going to do to fix this?”

While the primary purpose of the AOC was to monitor the progress toward achieving diversity goals, many stakeholders also appreciated the opportunity to collaborate on solutions. Griffin explained, “When we saw

*Definition on page 8

there was an issue, we would unpack the problem and look at diversity numbers for each contractor and each trade. Our discussions often spawned new ideas and best practices—like making sure union training directors were involved in corrective action meetings.”

“When we saw there was an issue, we would unpack the problem and look at diversity numbers for each contractor and each trade. Our discussions often spawned new ideas and best practices...”

Jill Lacey Griffin

Jennie Peterson (Encore, Director of Employment) agreed. “So many good ideas came out of the monthly AOC meetings—making corrective action meetings happen, checking on the distribution of weekend overtime hours, the standard letters to unions—a huge credit is due to the AOC.”

The obstacle to diversity and inclusion is often less about peoples’ willful opposition, but more about not knowing how to achieve it. The AOC created a space where people could learn from each other about the challenges involved in creating equal access and opportunity for minorities and women, particularly in the construction industry, and try to address them. Marlow recalled fondly that, “The AOC became a mechanism where people could sit across the table from each other and actually gain a perspective from the other person’s shoes...and engage in meaningful dialogue.”

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Ron Marlow

The casino teams shared ideas and so did the advocates. Jessica Yamas (Center for Women and Enterprise, Senior Director) said, “It was incredibly helpful to be connected and in the room with other resource providers and advocates.”

All of the stakeholders—casino licensees, gaming regulators, construction companies, building trades unions, community advocate organizations, etc. realized they had a role to play in ensuring that diversity and inclusion was a priority in the state’s emerging casino industry, and were willing to come to the table and participate in the AOC. Often, these can be adversarial relationships with construction companies often viewing community organizations as obstacles making unreasonable demands and community organizations distrusting developers and construction companies. Indeed, the early days of the AOC saw several heated discussions and it took some time to move past initial accusations and build trust. But, Marlow indicated, “Over time, it became clear that we could get a whole lot more accomplished if we were working together and talking to each other as opposed to yelling at each other. It helped that, from day one, the casino owners understood their roles and responsibilities and accepted the diversity goals as integral to their gaming license. They took their participation with the AOC and interaction with the community advocacy organizations seriously.”

THE RESULTS

The MGC emphasizes that these strategies and techniques don't happen organically. Jill Lacey-Griffin (MGC, Director of Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development) says, "Casinos' top level leadership empowered their diversity teams to devise and implement the processes that mattered. The diversity teams were innovative and committed to results."

That sentiment is emphasized by the presidents of both casino resorts in the state.

"Encore's commitment to diversity for the design and construction phases of the project came directly from our leadership team. While the executive support was critical for ensuring that the goals were taken seriously, our success wouldn't have been possible without commitment and hard work from every level of the organization."

Bob DeSalvio

Encore Boston Harbor, President

"From the beginning, MGM Springfield has been committed to diversity on the worksite and in our daily operations. We made this promise before the first shovels even went in the ground, and it was a promise we held true throughout the development."

Michael Mathis

MGM Springfield, President and COO

The stakeholders interviewed for this research overwhelmingly spoke positively about the effectiveness of the AOC, the MGC and its staff. Beverly Johnson (MMCA) said, "The AOC brought together entities with varying individual goals into a strategic partnership. We had different people at the table but respected each other and the magnitude of each other's objectives."

That effectiveness translated into concrete results, with the gaming licensees achieving most goals for workforce and supplier/contracting diversity on their projects. Those outcomes are displayed in the visual on the following page. The efforts of all of the contributors indicated throughout this document, and in the appendix attached, cannot be understated. Without the participation of each organization, these outcomes could not have been achieved.

DIVERSITY OUTCOMES

DIVERSITY OUTCOMES: DIVERSITY GOALS VS. ACTUAL OUTCOMES

Project	Workforce – Tradespersons					
	Women		Minority		Veterans	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Encore Boston Harbor*	6.9%	7.2%	15.3%	25.3%	3.0%	5.4%
MGM Springfield**	6.9%	7.67%	15.3%	22.95%	8.0%	8.42%
Plainridge Park Casino	7.0%	4.0%	16%	17.0%	priority	7.0%

	Supplier/Contracting					
	WBE		MBE		VBE	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Encore Boston Harbor – Design*	10.0%	8.2%	7.9%	8.4%	1.0%	6.1%
Encore Boston Harbor – Construction*	5.4%	12.7%	5.0%	5.9%	1.0%	2.8%
MGM Springfield – Design	10.0%	14.9%	5.0%	11.8%	2.0%	6.2%
MGM Springfield – Construction	10.0%	21.4%	5.0%	7.0%	2.0%	6.3%
Plainridge Park Casino	7.0%	13.0%	4.0%	10.0%	3.0%	9.0%

*Numbers are not yet final, current as of April 2019 reporting

MGM SPRINGFIELD TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

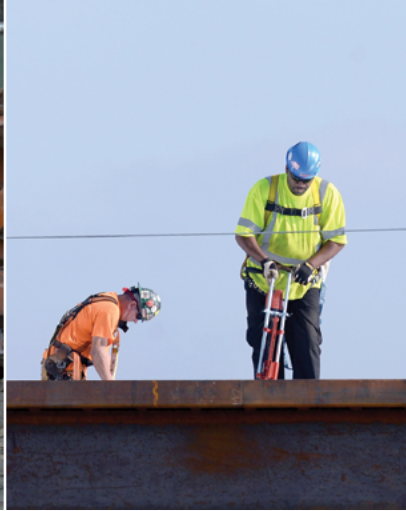
Workforce Diversity		Minority		Veterans	
Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
6.9%	9.0%	15.3%	21.9%	8.0%	8.7%

**MGM reported both total diversity and diversity of union tradespersons

APPENDIX

ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING ON THE MASSACHUSETTS GAMING COMMISSION'S ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE (AOC)

Action for Regional Equity	Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation
AECOM-Tishman	Massachusetts Latino Chamber of Commerce
Black Economic Council of Massachusetts	Massachusetts Minority Contractors Association
Black Economic Justice Institute	Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Coalition
Boston Workers Alliance	MGM Springfield
Building and Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District	Minority Business Development Agency
Building Pathways Boston	New England Carpenters–Local 108
Casino Action Network	New England Carpenters–Local 327
Center for Women and Enterprise	New England Carpenters–Local 336
Centro Latina	New England Carpenters Labor Management Program
Chelsea Collaborative	New England Regional Council of Carpenters
City of Everett	Northeast Center for Tradeswomen's Equity
City of Springfield	One Everett
Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Department of Veterans' Services	Partners for Community
Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development	Pinck & Co. Inc.
Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	Pioneer Valley Building Trades Council
Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Office of Access and Opportunity	Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council
Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Office of Business Development	Pioneer Valley Project
Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Supplier Diversity Office	Plumbers–Local 12
Community Works	PMA Consultants
Encore Boston Harbor	Policy Group on Tradeswomen's Issues
Hispanic American Institute	Springfield Technical Community College
Ironworkers–Local 7	Springfield Technical Community College Workforce Development Center
La Comunidad Inc.	Suffolk Construction
Massachusetts AFL-CIO	Turner Construction
Massachusetts Building Trades Council	University of Massachusetts Boston
Massachusetts Growth Capital Cooperation (MGCC)	University of Massachusetts Building Authority
	University of Massachusetts Labor Resource Center
	Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts
	Urban League of Springfield
	VeraCloud





101 Federal Street, 12th Floor, Boston, MA, 02110

TEL 617.979.8400

FAX 617.725.0258

www.massgaming.com
