

Joint Training and Recruitment Plan

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In response to the proviso required in ESHB 1125, Section 222 (18) (b), the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is pleased to provide the following report.

Washington State Ferries values Seattle Maritime Academy (SMA) as a critical industry partner. SMA is the only publicly funded post-secondary maritime school in the region. SMA naturally aligns with WSDOT Washington State Ferries' (WSF) initiatives, specifically our goals of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, resilience, and workforce development by creating accessible, equitable and equal opportunities for our community members to join the maritime industry.

WSF benefits from our partnership with SMA as a maritime employer and as a maritime training facility.

For almost a year, WSF has been coordinating efforts with Compass Courses to attract and train minorities and women to prepare them for employment with WSF or in other maritime organizations. WSF has developed a training course that will allow Compass graduates a unique opportunity to join and become Ordinary Seafarers in less time than the average applicant. We will hold our first shortened training classes beginning January 16, 2024.

WSF has an existing contract (K1070) with SMA for the use of their simulator for both WSF's Engine and Deck Training programs. These programs allow us to develop our licensed Engineers and Deck employees as they promote into higher level positions. SMA provides WSF access to their simulator equipment at a significantly lower cost making partnering with them fiscally responsible and fiscally sustainable.

In response to this proviso, WSF plans to amend our current contract to enable us to rent a classroom year-round at SMA for WSF's training programs e.g. AB to Mate, Pilotage, New Employee Orientation. The goal is to create a seamless relationship between SMA and WSF for WSF training needs now and in the future.

Recruiting students to SMA and employees to WSF is important to the success of both. Because of the close relationship between the two organizations, joint recruiting efforts can be used to increase both the quantity and diversity of students and potential employees at WSF.

Short-term recruiting plan:

SMA has a full-time student recruiter, currently funded by the City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development. Funding from this proviso will provide another year for the recruiter and they will engage in the following activities:

- Community Based Organization (CBO) liaison: SMA will partner with two Community Based Organizations to develop long-term relationships with communities of color. The goal of building these relationships is to offer SMA as an entry to the maritime industry for individuals who have not traditionally been represented in the local region's mariner community.
- High-school outreach: SMA will routinely visit with local high schools.
- Job/College fairs: SMA will participate in job and college fairs.
- Open house: SMA will host at least two community open house events at the SMA campus each year.

- Community events: SMA will attend and assist in hosting community events, especially those with a focus on maritime careers.

The Student Recruiter will provide a schedule of events to WSF. In consultation with the Human Resources Office at WSF, SMA will identify certain events where WSF personnel should attend. The intent of having WSF personnel with SMA personnel is to present to potential students both an educational opportunity and a clear career pathway upon graduation. Additionally, WSF will visit SMA twice per academic year to present career opportunities to SMA students (both for internship opportunities and post-internship employment).

5-year Recruitment plan:

CBO partnerships: Continued work with CBOs to ensure outreach to underrepresented communities, with focus on both educational opportunities and career pathways. SMA will also continue to partner with organizations to provide entry-level training for those pursuing employment with WSF (eg. Seattle Jobs Initiative COMPASS Grant (Working on the Water)) and participate in WSF sponsored career fair events such as Kitsap Try-A-Trade and WSF Eagle Harbor Days.

Outreach events: SMA staff will continue to conduct outreach events (high school visits, job/college fairs, etc.) with a focus on recruiting from underrepresented communities and demographics.

Please contact Nicole McIntosh, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Washington State Ferries Division, at mcintosh@wsdot.wa.gov if you have questions or need additional information.