

MELWOOD'S BUILDING PATHS

A program designed to prepare people with disabilities to enter the construction and skilled trades field.

The skilled trades continue to have a high demand for workers, while people with disabilities remain underemployed, pointing to a natural solution – leveraging the untapped potential and talent of people with disabilities while creating an opportunity for meaningful employment.

In partnership with the College of Southern Maryland, Building Paths consists of both construction pre-apprenticeship credentialing and professional development training. The program is designed to ensure participants are equipped with the technical know-how to enter the construction and skilled trades field through a job or apprenticeship program.

Partnering with Melwood not only helps employers find great talent, but often also adds to their bottom line. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) has produced over \$1 billion in tax savings to employers who hire people with disabilities. Melwood can help employers maximize this added benefit while working with people with disabilities to launch their careers.



THE BENEFITS OF A NEURODIVERSE WORKFORCE

Neurodiversity is another layer of building a more inclusive workforce, bringing new perspectives that cultivate a more well-rounded team, strengthen company culture, and spearhead innovation. Inclusive hiring practices are not simply “charity” or “good corporate citizenship” – there’s a true business benefit.

According to multiple studies, including data from the U.S. Department of Labor and Accenture, employers who have embraced disability inclusion as a component of their talent strategy consistently see an increase in:

- **Retention of valued employees**
- **Employee productivity**
- **Workplace safety**
- **Revenue and profit margins**

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Melwood's Building Paths is a 14-week program offered in partnership with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) through their Workforce Center and the Maryland Center for Environmental Training. Training is held at the Melwood campus in Waldorf, Maryland and at the CSM campus in Hughesville. College coursework is delivered online with in-person facilitation. Additionally, there is an in-person Construction Core Lab class designed to develop construction trade application skills. The college training will follow the CSM construction pre-apprenticeship credentialing. After the 14-week instruction course, participants will receive ongoing career development support.



Participants have the opportunity to earn the following credentials:

- College of Southern Maryland Construction Trades Core Skills via a 75-hour course
- Excavation Safety
- Confined Space Entry
- OSHA 10-hour Construction
- American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) Flagger
- National Safety Council (NSC) First Aid, CPR, AED

Ways to Partner with Building Paths:

- Recruit our candidates
- Establish a candidate pipeline to improve inclusive hiring and retention at your company
- Provide critical financial support to ensure program vitality and empower a greater workforce

Melwood is a leading employer, advocate, and preferred provider for people with disabilities. Devoted to creating a world in which people with disabilities are fully included since 1963, Melwood's innovative strategies and programs empower people with disabilities to live, work and thrive in the community.



Interested in learning more or signing up for our next cohort?
Contact: BuildingPaths@Melwood.org