

Nicor Gas Market Development Initiative

April 30, 2024

SAG Equity Subcommittee

Allison Gregoire, Program Manager



Energy
Efficiency
Program

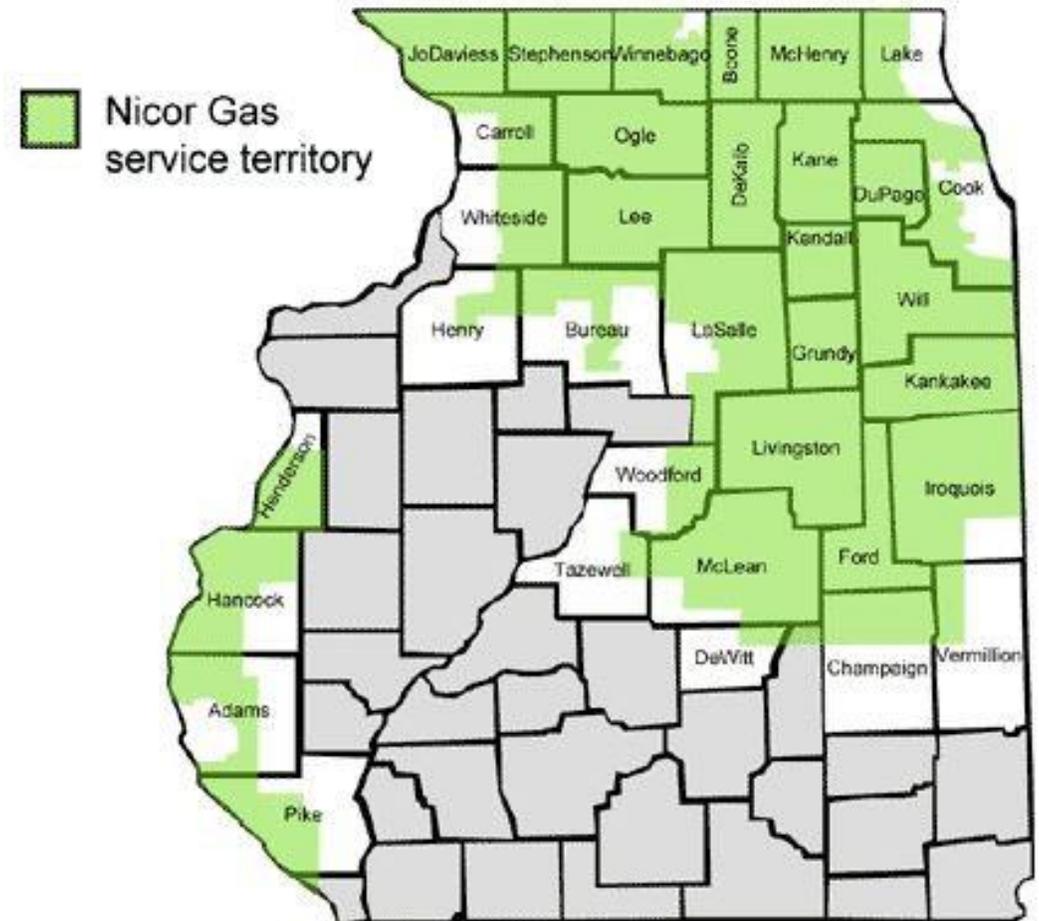
Overview of MDI

Background

- New initiative built into filed plan
- MDI research completed in 2022
- Implementation of programs informed by research

Objectives

- Increase opportunities for diverse contractors and workers
- Build support from community partners
- Increase transparency and equity for contractors





**Trade Ally
Development (TAD)
Program**

Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program

Trade Ally Development (TAD) Overview

Objectives

- Develop and support diverse trade allies in energy efficiency industry to:
 - Improve business practices for resiliency
 - Create a business mentorship environment
 - Provide support for diverse supplier/technical certifications
 - Educate about the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program's rebates and incentive opportunities
- Meet the energy efficiency needs of communities in the Nicor Gas service territory



2023 Key Accomplishments

May – July

- **Marketing and outreach**

- Partnered with five CBOs to promote and bring awareness to program
- Engaged three CBOs as subject matter experts (SMEs) to provide back-office support services

KPI GOAL ACHIEVED: 5 CBO Partnerships

- **Recruitment**

- Received 18 applications
- Interviewed 14 applicants
- Accepted 10 applicants into the cohort

KPI GOAL ACHIEVED: Accept 10 Cohort Members

2023 Key Accomplishments

July – December

- Led eight webinars
- Held 12 one-on-one business coaching sessions
- Facilitated business model canvas (BMC) and business growth plan (BGP) development exercises
 - 100% of cohort members completed BMC and BGP
 - 80% of cohort members attended all webinars
 - 90% of cohort members attended all one-on-one biz coaching sessions
- Graduated all 10 cohort members
- Certifications acquired by diverse trade allies (DTAs)

KPI GOAL ACHIEVED: Three certifications acquired by DTAs

TAD Testimonial



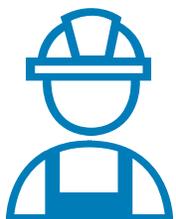
"I loved the Nicor Gas TAD Program so much! The TAD Team was not only amazing with their leadership skills, but they made sure everyone understood the material we were discussing before moving on to the next topic. They made sure that my business had the tools it needed to thrive even further. This program is a hidden gem, and I recommend it to all of my colleagues." – **David, Sensational Heating & Cooling**

Looking Ahead to 2024



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Program Goals



Diversify our trade ally network by increasing the number of minority, women and veteran contractors



Educate about the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program's (EEP) offerings; generate projects to increase business and help customers participate in the EEP to help save money and energy



Evaluate company needs and provide weekly one-on-one support and assistance with: HR, IT/technical, business practices, certifications, EE growth plans, project financing, sales and marketing, etc.



Identify, address and resolve barriers to cohort members' success.

Wraparound Services



- **Engagement stipend**
 - \$130 per/hour
 - Webinars (8)
 - One-on-one business coaching (15)
- **Certification stipend**
 - \$1,500
 - Diverse/industry certification
- **Back-office support stipend**
 - \$1,000
 - Administrative, taxes, technical support, etc.

Training Webinar Timeline

**In-Person Orientation &
Intro to Energy and
Sustainability**

April 25

**Five S's of
Business Optimization**

May 9

**Best Business Practices
& Project Financing**

May 23

**Overview of Nicor Gas
EEP Portfolio**

May 2

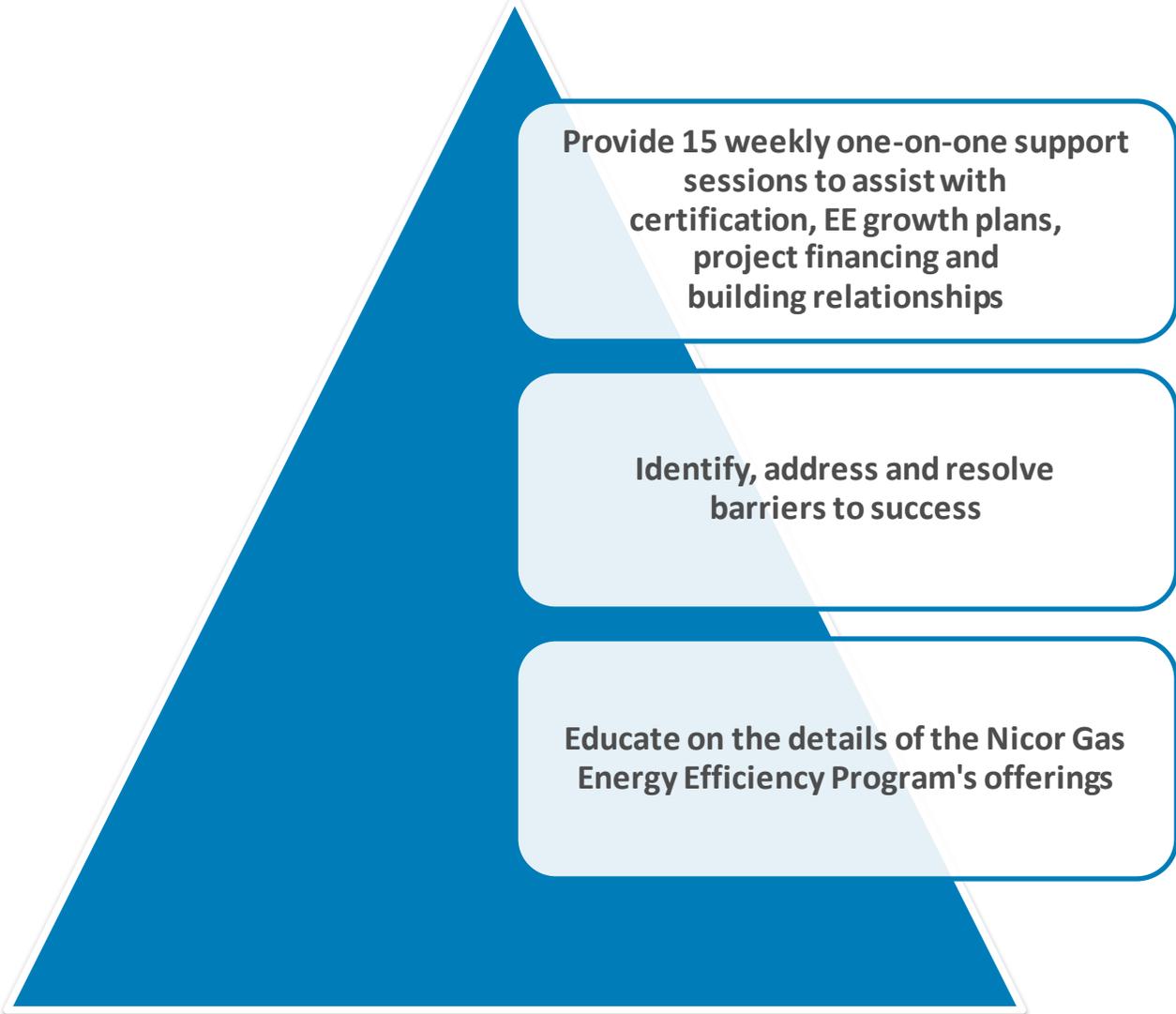
**Deep Dive: Nicor Gas Trade Ally
Network & Diverse Suppliers**

May 16

Training Webinar Timeline (cont.)



Business Coaching Sessions



Provide 15 weekly one-on-one support sessions to assist with certification, EE growth plans, project financing and building relationships

Identify, address and resolve barriers to success

Educate on the details of the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program's offerings

What's New for 2024?

Mentorship Program

- Performance metrics
 - Completion of individual development plans
 - Participation in required mentorship sessions (in-person and/or virtual)

Alumni Network

- Alumni engagement: media presence, project walk throughs/project spotlights
- Performance metrics
 - RSVPs and attendance at events
 - Number of alumni participating in mentorship sessions
 - Projects completed
 - Therms saved
 - Number of alumni accepted into the trade ally/Contractor Circle Network



**Workforce Training and
Employment (WTE) Program**

WTE Objectives

Objectives

- Expand the energy efficiency workforce by developing building scientists
- Provide free hands-on training and industry certifications
- Help individuals find gainful employment in the industry that will support their family's economy

Priorities

- Reduce barriers to success through wraparound services
- Focus on novice and skilled professionals
- Target underserved and under-resourced communities within the Nicor Gas service territory



WTE 2023 in Review

Service Territories

11 South Suburban residents

1 West Suburban resident

Age

18 to 50+

Gender

Male: 10; Female: 2

Novice cohort

- Target participants
 - Entry-level skillset
 - MDI communities
- Safety training
- HHP, BSP, ALCI, DET Verifier
- On-the-job training
- Partner employers

Skilled cohort

- Target participants
 - MDI communities
 - Experience in related field
 - Employed by local contractors
- BSP and BA-T training
- Increased earning potential

Wraparound Services



Personal support

- Wage replacement
 - Novice: \$16/hour
 - Skilled: \$300/week
- Daily hot meals
- Childcare and travel
 - Childcare: \$125 stipend
 - Travel: \$25/week
- Access to mental health services

Career support

- Financial literacy
- Career etiquette
- Resume writing
- Work tools for OJT

2023 Skilled Cohort Highlights

- July 17—August 4
- 22 applicants
 - 12 phone interviews
 - 10 final interviews
- Six participants
- 6 Graduates
- 6 BSP Certified
 - 100% Pass Rate
- Five Building Analyst Technician certified
 - 83% pass rate
- Two promotions
 - 3-5% pay increase
 - Title change: Crew Leader



2023 Novice Cohort Highlights



- August 26—October 18
- 50 applicants
- Six graduates
- Five Healthy Housing Principles (HHP) certified
- Six Building Science Principles (BSP) certified
- Six Air Leakage Control Insulator (ALCI) certified
- Six Duct & Envelope Tightness (DET) Verifier certified
- Four work placements
- Three promotions
- New average pay: \$28/hour up from minimum wage

WTE Novice Testimonial



Looking Ahead to 2024



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What do we know in 2024?

Targeted area: Aurora/Western Suburbs

- This area has a large population of needs
- Large Hispanic and African-American population

Training Space:

- Waubensee Community College
- City of Aurora – Hollywood Casino Warehouse
- Nicor Gas Technical Training Center for safety trainings & Skilled cohort

Cohorts:

- Novice Cohort:
 - July 15—August 30
 - 10-12 Cohort members
- Skilled Cohort:
 - September 30—October 18
 - 5-6 cohort members



Instructor:

- Insight Property Services; Joe Konopacki

Marketing/Recruitment:

- Leverage Nicor Gas' existing community relationships
- Collaborate with CBOs that service the targeted area
- Partner with Nicor Gas' Trade Ally Program Manager for Skilled recruitment

Opportunities

- Subsidized tools
- Safety training with the Nicor Gas team

Curriculum Review

Novice Curriculum

Seven Weeks:

Full-time

Safety Trainings:

- OSHA-10
- CPR/First AID/AED
- Confined Spaces, Ladder Safety, Safe Driving

BPI Trainings:

- Healthy Housing Principles
- Building Science Principles
- Air Leakage Control Installer

Skilled Curriculum

Three Weeks:

Part-time

BPI Trainings:

- Building Science Principles
- Building Analyst Technician

Questions?



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