

# Market Development Initiative Third Party Evaluation Takeaways

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Energy  
Efficiency  
Program

# Evaluation Timeline

- Evaluation completed in December 2024 and reviewed the first year of our program (2023).
- Encolor Consulting – RFP Process Selection.
- EcoHealth Strategies - an MBE consultancy specializing in strategic policy advice, program design and program evaluation for nonprofits, industries and municipalities.



# Nicor Gas MDI Overview

## Initiative Objectives

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

## Workforce Training & Employment Program:

- Increase the energy efficiency workforce by developing skilled building scientists
- Provide free hands-on training and industry certifications
- Help individuals find gainful employment in the industry

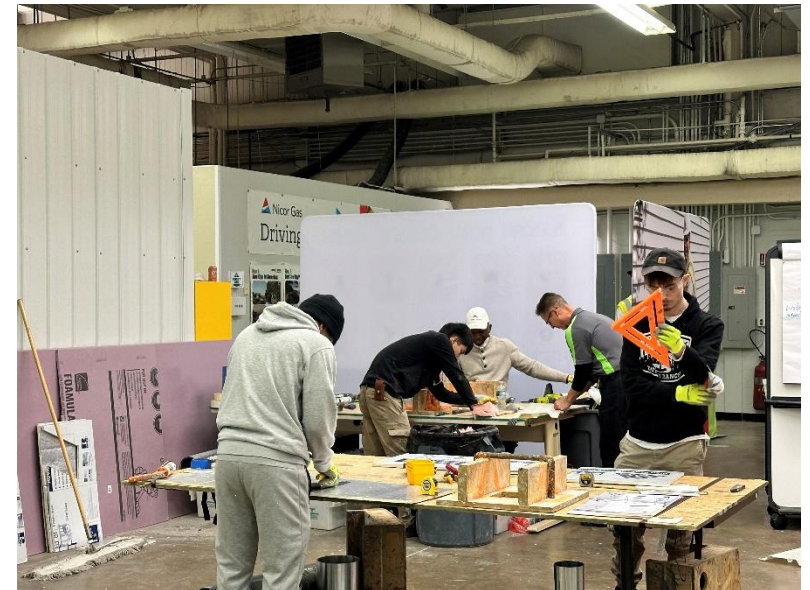
## Trade Ally Development Program:

- Support the growth and development of diverse trade allies as they expand their businesses into the energy efficiency industry
- Improve business practices for resiliency
- Create a business mentorship environment
- Provide support for diverse/technical certifications



# Primary Evaluation Deliverables

- What's performing well in our program
- Areas of improvement
- Best practices for program implementation
- Actionable recommendations for improvement
- Data collected from focus groups, surveys, interviews and curriculum review.



# Summary of Findings - Strengths: Trade Ally Development Program

**100%**

**of participants surveyed  
agreed that TAD provided  
them with a familiarity of the  
Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency  
Program offerings and their  
role in providing these  
offerings.**

- Networking with peers
- Improved perception of energy efficiency offerings and rebates
- Flexibility and wraparound services
- One-on-one sessions with program staff

# Summary of Findings - Improvements: Trade Ally Development Program

- Financial constraints that impede growth
- More formal post-graduation follow ups
- More general trade ally support
- Need for post-graduation support in accessing back-office needs



# Summary of Findings - Strengths: Workforce Training & Employment Program

- Program staff support
- Skills provided for meaningful employment
- One-on-one mentoring sessions
- BPI certifications
- Job placement
- Wraparound services

**90% +**

**Graduation rate and  
work placement to date**



# Summary of Findings - Improvements: Workforce Training & Employment

- Long-term access to energy efficiency opportunities in their communities
- More real-world training prior to employment
- Greater balance between classroom and hands-on training





# Action Items

- Implementation of a formal post-graduation mentorship program for Trade Ally Development Program.
- More live-demonstrations with tools in attics and crawl spaces for Novice WTE cohort.
- Marketing material to reflect hands-on job aspects and real-world applications.
- Continue to offer BPI Certifications to make participants more competitive.

# Action Items

- Continue to offer impactful wraparound services in all programs.
- Enhance upfront communication for CBOs, such as providing an orientation package that discusses comprehensive program details early.
- Provide post-program follow-up to inform CBOs of the impact their support has achieved, share success stories from graduates' placement.

# Questions?



Energy  
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