



# QUARTERLY REPORT

Ending 12/31/2025

**Program:** Building Strong Communities, Inc. (501c3 nonprofit)  
**Address:** 353 W 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 105, St. Paul, MN 55102  
**Reporting Period:** Quarter Ending 12/31/2025

**Submission Date:** 02/01/2026  
**Submitted By:** Rick Martagon, Executive Director

**Funding:** Direct Legislative Appropriation  
**Funding Source:** MN Legislature / Workforce Development Fund  
**State Agency:** MN Department of Labor and Industry

**MN LEGISLATIVE FUNDING:**

SFY2026: \$400,000  
 SFY2027: \$400,000  
 TOTAL: \$800,000

**MN LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATION LANGUAGE:**

A bill for an act relating to labor and industry; appropriating money for apprenticeship readiness programming. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA: Section 1. APPROPRIATIONS; BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES, INC. \$400,000 in fiscal year 2026 and \$400,000 in fiscal year 2027 are appropriated from the workforce development fund to the commissioner of labor and industry for a grant to Building Strong Communities, Inc. for a statewide apprenticeship readiness program that prepares women; individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; and veterans to enter the building and construction industries. These appropriations are onetime.

Source: [SF 1508 Introduction - 94th Legislature \(2025 - 2026\)](#)

**REPORTING:**

By February 1, of each year following receipt of the grant, Building Strong Communities must submit a report to the commissioner of labor and industry and the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over labor and industry that identifies: (1) a detailed accounting of the use of the grant; and (2) the number and demographics of individuals served by the grant. The report must be filed according to Minnesota Statutes, section 3.195.

**BUDGET:**

Direct Appropriation – MNDLI (contract execution date: 10/24/2025)	YEAR 1 BUDGET (SFY2026)	YEAR 1 EXPENDED (ENDING 12/31/2025)
Personnel:	\$93,850.60	\$9,407.72
Travel:	\$1,075.00	\$120.40
Contractual:	\$170,955.00	\$16,787.82
Training:	\$86,802.00	\$0.00
Support Service:	\$23,000.00	\$0.00
Administrative Cost:	\$3,052.40	\$0.00
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$380,000.00</b>	<b>\$26,315.94</b>



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## ABOUT BSC:

Building Strong Communities (BSC) operates a state-recognized construction apprenticeship-preparatory program that recruits and enrolls Minnesotans interested in careers in construction through a 12-week apprenticeship-preparatory program to prepare individuals for construction careers and registered apprenticeships. Its program training component commences in February and concludes in May annually but provides ongoing employment-placement support to its participants. Its outreach, recruitment and youth-career exploration program components operate year-round while its apprenticeship-preparatory program planning and enrollment ramps up each fall beginning in August.

## PROGRAM/GRANT METRIC GOALS:

METRIC GOALS SFY2026-SFY2027 Building Strong Communities	Qtr 2 (10/1/25- 12/31/25)	Qtr 3 (1/1/26- 3/31/26)	Qtr 4 (4/1/26- 6/30/26)	Qtr 5 (7/1/26- 9/30/26)	Qtr 6 (10/1/26- 12/31/26)	Qtr 7 (1/1/27- 3/31/27)	Qtr 8 (4/1/27- 6/30/27)	CUMULATIVE TOTAL:
Number of CT Events:	3	4	2	0	4	3	2	18
Number Served CT (actual attendees):	2,450	3,000	1,200	0	2,500	2,500	1,000	12,650
Number of Schools Served CT (actual attended):	117	108	28	0	120	105	25	503
Number of BSC Apprenticeship-Preparatory Program Participants Enrolled	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	200
Number of BSC Apprenticeship-Preparatory Program Participants Supported	0	23	0	0	0	23	0	46
Number of supported_BSC Apprenticeship-Preparatory Program Participants Completed	0	0	20	0	0	0	20	40
Number of supported BSC Apprenticeship-Preparatory program participants placed in Construction Employment/Apprenticeship	0	0	15	3	0	0	15	33

BSC PROGRAM/GRANT OUTCOMES:	QUARTER ENDING 12/31/2025	
Number of CT Events	3	
Number CT Attendees:	2,110	
Number of Schools Served (CT):	103	
Number of BSC App-Prep Participants Enrolled:	0	<i>&lt; BSC Apprenticeship-Prep 2026 Cohort Component to Begin February 9, 2026</i>
Number of BSC App-Prep Participants Supported:	0	
Number of Supported BSC App-Prep Participants Completed:	0	
Number of Supported BSC App-Prep Participants Placed in Construction Employment/Apprenticeship	0	



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## **PROGRAM UPDATE - NARRATIVE:**

In July 2025, BSC began engaging with the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry responding to its pre-award documentation requests. BSC submitted a workplan and performance outcome to the department in late September 2025 and worked with the department to finalize. On October 24, 2025, Building Strong Communities entered into, and executed a contract with the MN Department of Labor and Industry in support of its programming related to said funding.

### ***BSC's Apprenticeship-Preparatory Programming Component***

Recruitment and outreach efforts continued throughout this reporting period. Awareness of and interest in this program continues to grow. BSC has engaged in various recruitment strategies including direct trade partner engagement, community events, career fairs, online market targeting through a vendor, as well as veteran collaborations including the Helmets to Hardhats Initiative. BSC can report that received 1,158 applications to participate over calendar 2025 alone with previous applicants on a waiting list. Further, BSC worked with community partners like True North Goodwill (Duluth), Workforce Development, Inc (SE Minn) and Neighbors (Dakota County), Unidos, Minneapolis Apprenticeship Outreach Office, Urban League Twin Cities, Summit Academy OIC, Goodwill-Easter Seals – Twin Cities, and the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades throughout Minnesota to recruit applicants for its next cohort. BSC has seen referrals to the program increase, in particular from program alumni.

In the reporting period, application submissions to its BSC's apprenticeship-preparatory program (online) continued with 24 virtual information sessions hosted by BSC through the close of the year. These information sessions provided a helpful primer about the BSC experience, its requirements, and programming to further inform those that have applied (and those considering applying) for consideration. In addition to these virtual sessions, BSC conducted direct intake assessments with individual applicants (those who had applied and completed the information session attendance requirement) to further determine whether the applicant affirmed their continued interest in enrollment, met the minimum requirements, and confirmed readiness for the program. Nearly 200 intake assessments were conducted. BSC seeks to enroll approximately 105 participants with orientation sessions occurring in January 2026 along with enrollments into the North Hennepin Community College system. As this report is being finalized, BSC hosted 7 in-person participant orientations in the Twin Cities, one in Rochester, and one in Duluth. Completion of participant enrollment for the 2026 cohort is expected in the first quarter of calendar year occurring around the first week of February 2026. Participant data such as demographics will be tracked and will be available going forward following the conclusion of the enrollment period. While the cohort is still in process of finalization as this report is written, BSC wanted to highlight that veteran enrollment for the 2026 cohort will reflect the largest number of veterans enrolled in program history.

In addition to its participant evaluation and enrollment work, BSC was actively engaging with its various vendors, training partners and stakeholders developing and finalizing service and programming schedules to align with the cohort launch set for February 9, 2026. The BSC experiences include the following programming: college credit through North Hennepin Community College; Emotional Intelligence workshops through Twin Cities Rise; Physical Awareness training; OSHA-10 Safety certification; First Aid/CPR/AED certification, Math Assessment; Mentorship



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workshop; mock interviews; various Trades introductions and experiences from BSC partners; drug screening; as well as advocate and placement support.

BSC staff is looking forward to the launch of its next cohort in February 2026!

### **BSC's Youth Career Exploration Program Component**

Simultaneously to its preparatory planning, BSC through its grant subrecipient Construct Tomorrow delivered three career-exploration events in the Rochester, Mankato and Twin Cities areas as planned engaging more than 100 schools and 2,100 participants.

CT EVENT DATE:	CT EVENT LOCATION:	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS/DISTRICTS ATTENDING:	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING:	NUMBER OF EVENTS:
10/28/2025	RCTC (Rochester)	30	654	1
11/18/2025	Mayo Event Center-Mankato	31	760	1
12/03/2025	Heritage Center (Brooklyn Center)	42	696	1
<b>QUARTER TOTALS ENDING 12/31/2025:</b>		103	2,110	3

Source: Construct Tomorrow Report Quarter Ending 12/31/2025

To engage in and learn more about the attendees served, each event attendee is invited by Construct Tomorrow to complete a voluntary survey during their visit. Not all choose to participate. However, about forty percent of attendees (840 responses) opted to complete a survey during the reporting period across these three events. Please find some attendee demographic data based upon attendee survey participation for the reporting period if considering the response rate is representative of the entire attendance (2,110):

- Number of attendees who completed a survey: 840
- Number of MN Counties Served based on School's attending: 25  
 COUNTIES: Anoka, Blue Earth, Brown, Carver, Dodge, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, Le Sueur, Martin, Mower, Nicollet, Olmsted, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sibley, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Watonwan, and Winona.
  - Number of Counties outside 7-county metro served: 19

➤ Attendee Gender Reported:

Categories	Survey Responses Reported	Percentage of Reported	Estimated Attendance Extrapolated
Male:	590	70.24%	1,482
Female:	176	20.95%	442
Other:	4	0.48%	10
Unknown/left blank:	70	8.33%	176
TOTALS:	840	100.00%	2,110



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➤ Attendee Race/Ethnicity Reported:

Categories	Survey Responses Reported	Percentage Reported
American Indian or Alaska Native	21	2.50%
Asian	1	.12%
Asian Indian American	16	1.90%
Black or African American	84	10%
Hispanic	11	1.31%
Hispanic or Latino	61	7.26%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	.24%
Other	15	1.79%
Two or More	57	6.79%
White	535	63.69%
Left Blank	37	4.40%
TOTALS:	840	

In summary, across the three regional events completed, 2,110 students attended from schools serving 25 counties to date. Of those attending, 840 students completed voluntary demographic surveys, representing nearly 40% of all participants. Survey data shows that approximately 70% of participants were male and 21% female. The participation rate of females in this program component (based upon available surveys completed) is notable as the US Bureau of Labor Statistics has indicated that female participation in the industry is estimated to be around 10%.