NextGen Policy Secures $6 Million Grant to Build Public Sector Apprenticeship Programs for Underserved Californians

NextGen Policy in Partnership with the Institute for Local Government and The Clover Agency, Fosters Apprenticeship Opportunities Throughout California

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 13, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- NextGen Policy, a California-based, Black-led, non-profit organization fighting for justice-centered policies and programs, today announced the U.S. Department of Labor awarded it a $6 million federal grant over four years to help California-based organizations build public sector apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. This news comes on the heels of the organization's recent award of a $1.8 million grant from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to provide programming to prepare youth participants for workplace success across several industry sectors in the Sacramento region.

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> *Dr. Ken Spence, Senior Policy Advisor at NextGen Policy*

This new federal grant builds on NextGen Policy's partnership with The Clover Agency, a leading grant management consultancy and the Institute for Local Government (ILG), a mission-driven non-profit organization providing education, training and capacity building services to cities, counties and special districts. The Clover Agency's work will focus on managing the teams, projects and outcomes for this grant program, while ILG will focus on expanding its role as an Intermediary and Program Sponsor for non-traditional apprenticeships for cities, counties and special districts. NextGen Policy will spearhead the pre-apprenticeship programs and teacher initiatives.

Together, the three organizations will establish a statewide Registered Apprenticeship "hub" that promotes the expansion of non-traditional Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)

opportunities in the public sector in high-demand occupations like accounting, information technology, mental and behavioral health, and more. The initiative is focused on addressing pervasive public sector labor shortages and ensuring low-income earners, opportunity youth, foster youth, people with disabilities, veterans, and the formerly incarcerated community can have career and economic mobility through high-quality local government jobs. Local government employers will have access to several hub benefits, such as:
- Incentive funding for participating employer partners
- Streamlined administrative processes and support
- Technical assistance in RAP design, RAP registration, system navigation and workforce alignment
- Linkages from RAPs to existing pre-apprenticeship programs which can provide novel pools for recruiting talent.

The partners have already secured support from over 25 associations, municipalities and other organizations. They are currently working to expand their apprenticeship and public employer networks to promote a symbiotic system where public sector organizations can benefit from providing apprenticeship opportunities and workers can develop in-demand skill sets. The awarding of this grant showcases the partners' joint commitment to expanding local government capacity, and empowering people with skill sets that lead to quality jobs and career advancement.

"This project represents a major step in supporting those in need. We're determined to create programs and mechanisms that provide necessary career skills that lead to stability," said Dr. Ken Spence, Senior Policy Advisor at NextGen Policy. "Our efforts truly aim to support Californians in need. We encourage any organization who can benefit from apprenticeships to participate and make a positive impact in their local communities."

Building on ILG's RAP intermediary program for local governments, this new partnership will identify impactful organizations and help them launch apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs as well as bolster teacher initiatives. Their support and oversight roles within the project provide training and technical assistance to participating organizations, as well as match public sector employers with prospective employees, community based organizations, other program sponsors, and other relevant supports , to address administrative barriers. The program also emphasizes comprehensive, coordinated training and support services to provide opportunities for adults facing significant employment barriers.

"With vacancy rates hovering at or above 15% and retirements looming, finding the next generation of public sector leaders is a top priority," said Erica Manuel, CEO and Executive Director of ILG. "Exceptional employees come from all walks of life, and we're excited to expand this important work to ensure that even more people can picture themselves in local government.

"We're proud to double-down on our partnership with NextGen Policy, and to deploy proven

strategies that empower underserved populations in their pursuit of gaining in-demand skills," said Dr. Paul De La Cerda, Co-Founder and Principal of The Clover Agency. "Our unique approach benefits participants and addresses the critical need for skilled workers in California's growing industries. We're looking forward to expanding this apprenticeship program and welcome any organization to join this effort."

For more information, read the U.S. Department of Labor's [announcement](#), or reach out to andrea@kandulacommunications.com.

Tyler Bushnell
NextGen Policy
tyler.bushnell@nextgenpolicy.org
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