



VINEYARD OFFSHORE



New Workforce for a New Industry

A Case Study in Offshore Wind Development

One of the most important economic benefits for local communities provided by offshore wind development is job creation, and Vineyard Offshore is committed to providing good jobs with family sustaining wages in support of a just transition.

The Vineyard method of offshore wind development means developing a skilled, diverse, and inclusive local offshore wind workforce for current and future projects.

Project Labor Agreement with Diversity Goals

This approach came to life with Vineyard Wind 1, where the first Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for an offshore wind project was signed. The PLA made a commitment that will result in more than 500 union jobs during project construction, along with hiring goals for women; Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC); and local residents, to ensure that underrepresented union workers have the opportunity to become qualified in offshore wind.

Specifically, the PLA called for 51% of the workforce to be residents of Southeastern Massachusetts (Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, and Duke Counties); 20% to be BIPOC; and 10% women. Contractors were to engage in processes and plans to achieve the BIPOC and women employment goals. Vineyard Wind provided \$500,000 for Building Pathways pre-apprenticeship training, along with similar programs, to help recruit, train, and employ local, BIPOC, and women apprentices for offshore wind and committed to supporting these programs and ongoing recruitment in the communities where Vineyard Wind is working.



Greny Bartelus, Electrical Apprentice at Vineyard Wind

The product of three years of negotiation with the Southeastern Massachusetts Building Trades Council, the Vineyard Wind 1 PLA ensured that the first-in-the-nation commercial-scale offshore wind project would be built by skilled, well-paid, local union workers, thereby setting a standard for the industry. At the same time, it served as a catalyst for opening up union jobs for traditionally underrepresented groups. And by focusing on the Southeastern Massachusetts region, the PLA ensured that the local offshore wind workforce created through the construction of Vineyard Wind 1 would be well qualified for union work on future projects, not only in Massachusetts but up and down the East Coast.

"The signing of this Project Labor Agreement sets the standard for offshore wind and other renewable energy projects across our country," said Frank Callahan, president of the Massachusetts Building Trades Council. "The men and women of North America's building trades unions are the best

trained, most highly skilled and most productive workforce in the world. They get the job done right while earning family-sustaining wages and benefits that provide them a secure place in America's middle class."

Looking Local First

Establishing a partnership with organized labor is just one part of Vineyard Offshore's community-based approach to workforce development, as established and refined on Vineyard Wind 1. Applying the principle of "look local first" to personnel as well as suppliers, Vineyard Wind spared no effort to connect residents of Southeastern Massachusetts communities to job opportunities created by the project - and learned a great deal about what is actually required to make that happen.

Vineyard Wind hosted and participated in a variety of workforce events and career fairs to inform local residents about job opportunities on the project. Between 2019 and 2020, Vineyard Wind staff participated in 42 career fairs and classroom presentations at middle schools, high schools, and colleges across Southeastern Massachusetts. In 2022, recruitment began in earnest, as Vineyard Wind held three hiring events, two on Martha's Vineyard, where the project's operations and maintenance operation will be located, and one in New Bedford, where project construction would be based. Thanks to extensive outreach by Vineyard Wind and community partner Vineyard Power - which included flyers distributed at local businesses and door-to-door, social media campaigns, radio ads, and online event listings - more than 230 residents attended the three events.



Attendees review employer information at Job Fair on Martha's Vineyard



Aerial view of a Job Fair in New Bedford



Using V/R technology at a Job Fair on Martha's Vineyard to find out what it's like to work on an offshore wind turbine

With the construction phase starting to ramp up, Vineyard Wind held another hiring event in New Bedford in January 2023, redoubling its efforts in both job offerings and recruitment. By reaching deep into the supply chain, 39 companies ranging from major contractors to local suppliers were lined up to participate, with 173 open positions to fill. These jobs ran the gamut, from electricians, welders, pipefitters, and carpenters to deck hands, mates, captains, safety managers, equipment operators, and project managers. With our New Bedford-born community liaison posting flyers, hanging banners around the city, and landing speaking spots on local radio, some 300 people pre-registered, and more than 500 attended. With food available, childcare provided, and a Spanish speaker on hand to translate and connect to language services, every effort was made to make the hiring event accessible and inclusive.

On Martha's Vineyard, Vineyard Wind pledged to site its operations and maintenance (O&M) facility there, with the goal of 100% of the facility's long-term jobs being held by island residents within five years. Vineyard Wind arranged for Bristol Community College, in partnership with Martha's Vineyard Adult Continuing Education, to offer Offshore Wind Technician Certificate Training on Martha's Vineyard; three participants have already been hired by wind turbine supplier GE and are undergoing on-the-job training in Oklahoma and at the Block Island wind farm. Community partner Vineyard Power has helped Vineyard Wind recruit candidates for these and other positions, such as crew transfer vessel mariners, health, safety, and environment professionals, and managerial staff, through weekly advertisements, office hours, and "speed dates" with contractors.



Yvonne Tobey,
Program Director
Building Pathways South

"Offshore wind is a huge opportunity for people in New Bedford and the surrounding area to join a new and growing industry," said **Yvonne Tobey, Program Director of the Building Pathways South** pre-apprenticeship program, which recruited participants for its program, including a new Offshore Wind 101 curriculum offered through Massachusetts Maritime Academy, at the New Bedford job fairs. "Vineyard Wind and the building trade unions offer residents a chance to get in on the ground floor."

"I was able to study everything here on the island, while working," said Charlie Rice, one of the first General Electric local hires as an entry-level offshore wind turbine technician. "There are year-round jobs on the island but most of them are seasonal, so to have something stable like this is huge."

Following Through, Hiring Up

Vineyard Wind's PLA and "look local first" hiring commitments are paying off. In the first two years of construction – September 2021 through August 2023 – 937 union workers worked on the project, well in excess of the 500 promised in the PLA. Among union workers during that period, 72% were from Southeastern Massachusetts, well above the 51% PLA goal. Of the nearly 1,000 non-union workers working on the project, 31% hailed from the region, with another 40% coming from elsewhere in Massachusetts.

In terms of diversity, BIPOC employment among union workers, at 19.6%, nearly reached the PLA goal of 20%, while the project was still short of its goals in women employment (3.6% versus an ambitious 10% goal) and apprentices (12.4% versus 20% goal).

With construction of Vineyard Wind 1 ongoing, Vineyard Offshore continues to draw lessons from the project to determine how to maximize employment opportunities for local workers, union and non-union, on the offshore wind projects that will power the U.S. economy of the future.



Workers preparing to connect an inter-array cable



Massachusetts Maritime Academy's Offshore Wind Training



Evora working at Covell's Beach parking lot