



Chesapeake Bay and Water
Resources Policy Committee (CBPC)
Water Workforce
Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion

May 17, 2024

Kishia L. Powell, WSSC Water
General Manager/CEO



WSSC WATER AT A GLANCE

 106 years of no drinking water quality violations, ever.



8th

Largest water utility in the United States



1.9M

Residents served



162 MGD

Water provided each day



1000 Sq. Miles

Size of WSSC Water's Service Area



1,735

Members of Team H₂O deliver on our mission



\$114.9B

WSSC Water supports the economic output of Prince George's and Montgomery counties



\$1.8B

FY2025 Operating & Capital Budget



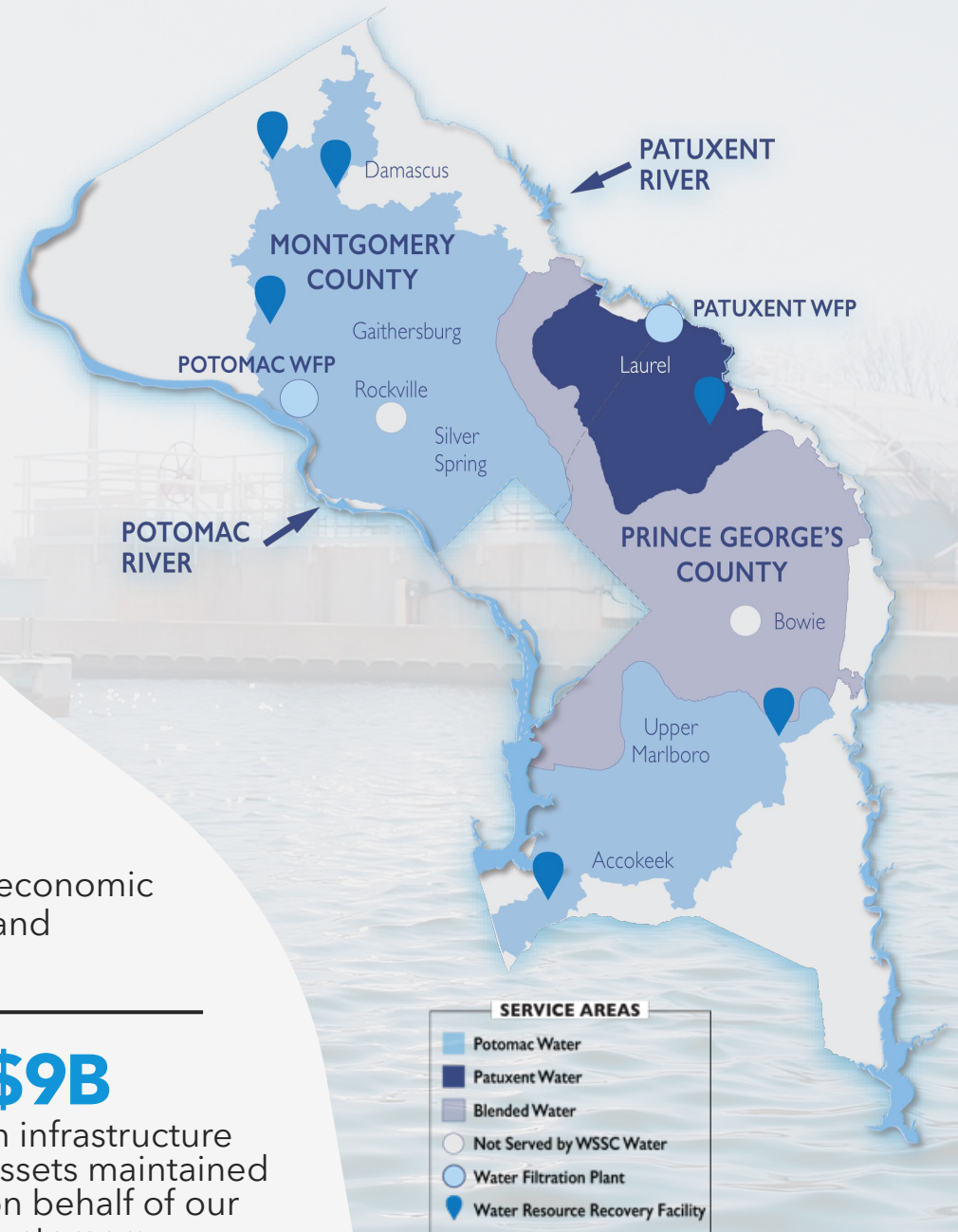
\$5.9B

6-Year Capital Improvements Program



\$9B

In infrastructure assets maintained on behalf of our customers



TEAM H₂O AT A GLANCE



1,836

Authorized
Positions



270

Vacancies



14.7%

Vacancy
Rate



20%

Retirement
Eligible



10.5%

Attrition
Rate



Less Than 5%

of Team in Early Career

\$173M

in Salaries & Wages
Annually

23%

of every
dollar is spent
on Team H₂O

High Turnover

in *Critical Positions*

MEGATRENDS

Shaping the Future of the Water Sector



Workforce
Development



PFAS Risks



Aging
Infrastructure



Transformations in
Public Health



Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion and
Justice



Water Supply and
Climate Change



Technology
& Digital
Transformation



Workforce Development

As important a need as
investing in critical
infrastructure

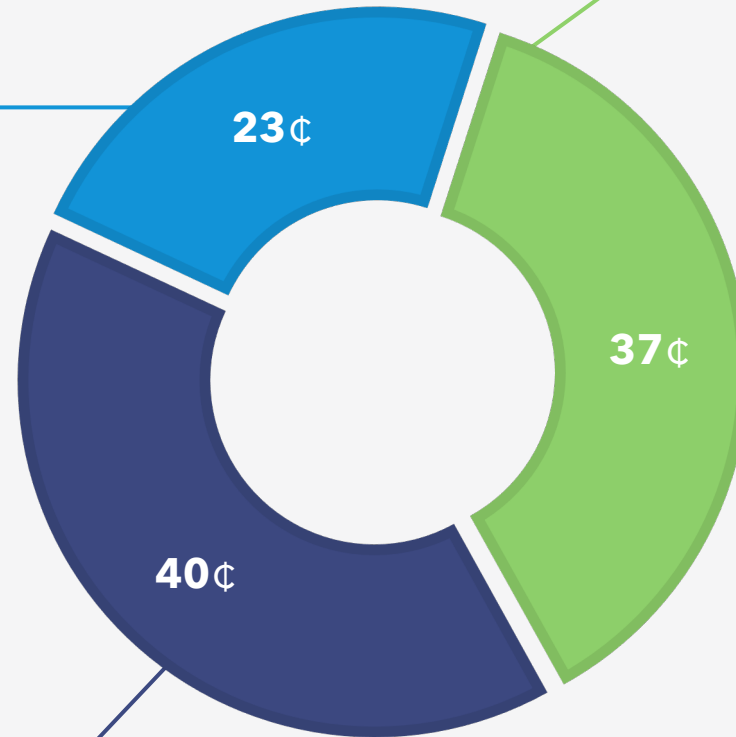
Must be:

- Diverse
- Fit for Future

FY2024 - Where The Money Goes - Every Dollar of Revenue

People

- Salaries and wages
- Employee benefits
- Employee trainings



Debt Service & PAYGO

- Debt payments and cash for the construction of pipes and facilities

Operations & Maintenance

- Operations and maintenance for facilities (Including share of Blue Plains)
- Fixing broken or leaking pipes and repairing roads
- Heat, light and power for facilities
- Maintaining vehicles and equipment
- Customer service
- Corporate finance
- IT services

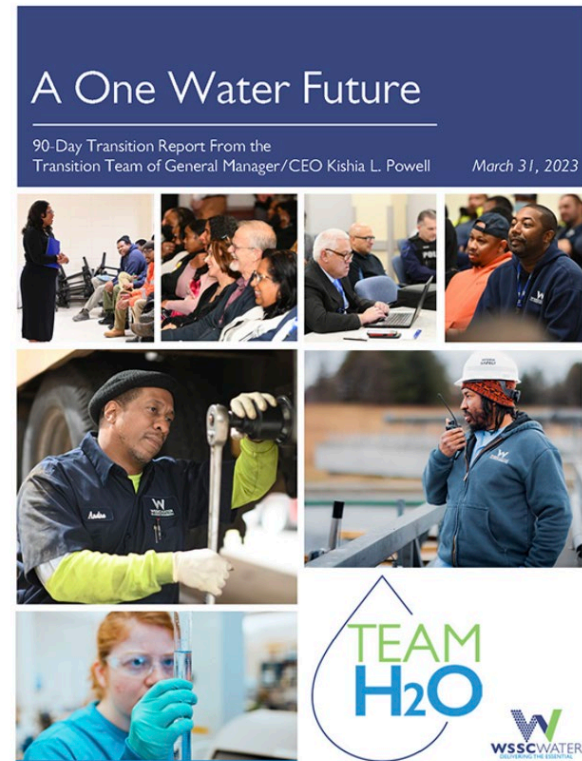
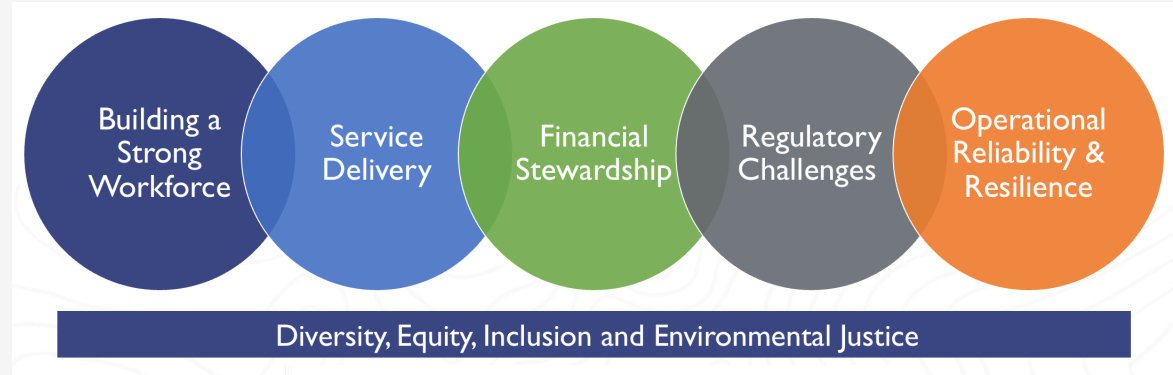
Cost Drivers

- 40 cents or 40% of costs are due to capital project financing
 - Non-discretionary

Over 52% of costs are fixed

First Year Priorities

- Building a Strong Workforce established as top priority
- 178 Recommendations in 90-Day Transition Report
- 28% of the recommendations dedicated to Building a Strong Workforce
 - Training
 - Compensation
 - Benefits/Total Rewards
 - Policies
 - Workforce Development
 - Improving workplace culture



Total Rewards Strategy



Challenges and Barriers

Training opportunities/
budgets need
improvement

**Compensation
Lagging/ Employees
leave and return to get
higher pay**

Need attractive benefits
package

Experience requirements
may not facilitate internal
promotions to leadership
roles

**Some policies do not
support diversity and
inclusion/ internal
promotions**

**Barriers to entry for
entry level positions**

Succession plan does not
exist; no established
pipelines

**Utilities budget by the
FTE; an individual's
progression is
dependent on others'
movement**

Not fully leveraging
Water Babies



Workforce Development Pillars



Retention

- JEDI focused
- **Total Rewards improvements**
- **Compensation - leading market**
- Improve culture
- People Policy changes
- Improve existing workforce development programs
- Implement Succession planning/knowledge management
- Help Team H₂O identify WIIFM
- Increase budget for training and salary enhancements
- **Exchange program opportunities**
- **Supportive services to allow career enhancement**

Recruitment

- Changes to entry level position minimum requirements
- Remove disqualifiers for pre-screening questions
- **Develop workforce pipelines:**
 - High School
 - Area Colleges/Universities
 - Resource programs for women
 - Re-entry partnerships
 - Apprenticeship/ Earn and Learn Programs
 - Reframe internship program as a pipeline
- Competitive pay and benefits
- **"Pursue Your Passion"** Series

Engagement

- Employee journey mapping
- **Transition team**
- **Future water leaders**
- All hands meetings and monthly livestream events
- **Participation in Working groups to facilitate organizational change**
- Resource groups For employees
- Association engagement at regional and national level
- **"Pursue Your Passion"** Series

- **Atlanta Watershed Management**

- **Case Study**

- Re-Entry Partnership
- My Journey Matters - Youth
- Women - Victims of Trafficking
- Salary increases for hard-to-fill positions

Workforce Development Pathways



FUTURE WATER LEADER FINALISTS



ERIK LEWIS
PROCUREMENT



FREDDY ORDONEZ
PRODUCTION



DARCY MALE
ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION



BRANDON STEWART
CUSTOMER SERVICE



JEGNOW ESSATU
PRODUCTION



ANDRES VILLARRAGA
ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION



CHRISTOPHER CARO
UTILITY SERVICES



NNEKA ASSING
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



JASON FLORY
ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION



MAYA SATHYANADHAN
ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION

TEAM H₂O / A day in the life

with Jeff Bell



“This report is not the end... this is just the beginning. Our customers expect and deserve excellence in all we do, and this document will allow us to better serve them in support of our clean-water mission.”

- Retention, Recruitment and Engagement Strategies do not have to be mutually exclusive.

Regional Collaboration for Workforce Development



- Regional industry and workforce development collaboration led by City of Baltimore DPW and WSSC Water
- Pursuing \$914k in EPA grant
- **The Chesapeake Water Workforce Network**
 - Centered around three pillars: Retention, Recruitment and Engagement
 - Focus on cultural competence and underemployed/underserved communities and populations



Project Title
Chesapeake Water Workforce Network

Project Area
P.A.#3: Regional industry and workforce development collaborations to address water utility employment, particularly in areas of high unemployment or for water utilities with a high proportion of retirement eligible employees.

Name of Applicant
Baltimore City Department of Public Works
WSSC Water

Key Personnel and Contact Information
Paul Sayan, Acting Bureau Head, Water & Wastewater
Bureau of Water and Wastewater
Paul.Sayan@baltimorecity.gov
410-396-3502

Kishia Powell, General Manager/CEO
kishia.powell@wsscwater.com
301-206-8500

Total project cost: \$2,224,883.43
Federal Funds: \$914,500.00
Non-Federal Funds: \$1,310,383.43 Of In-Kind Costs

PARTNERS:

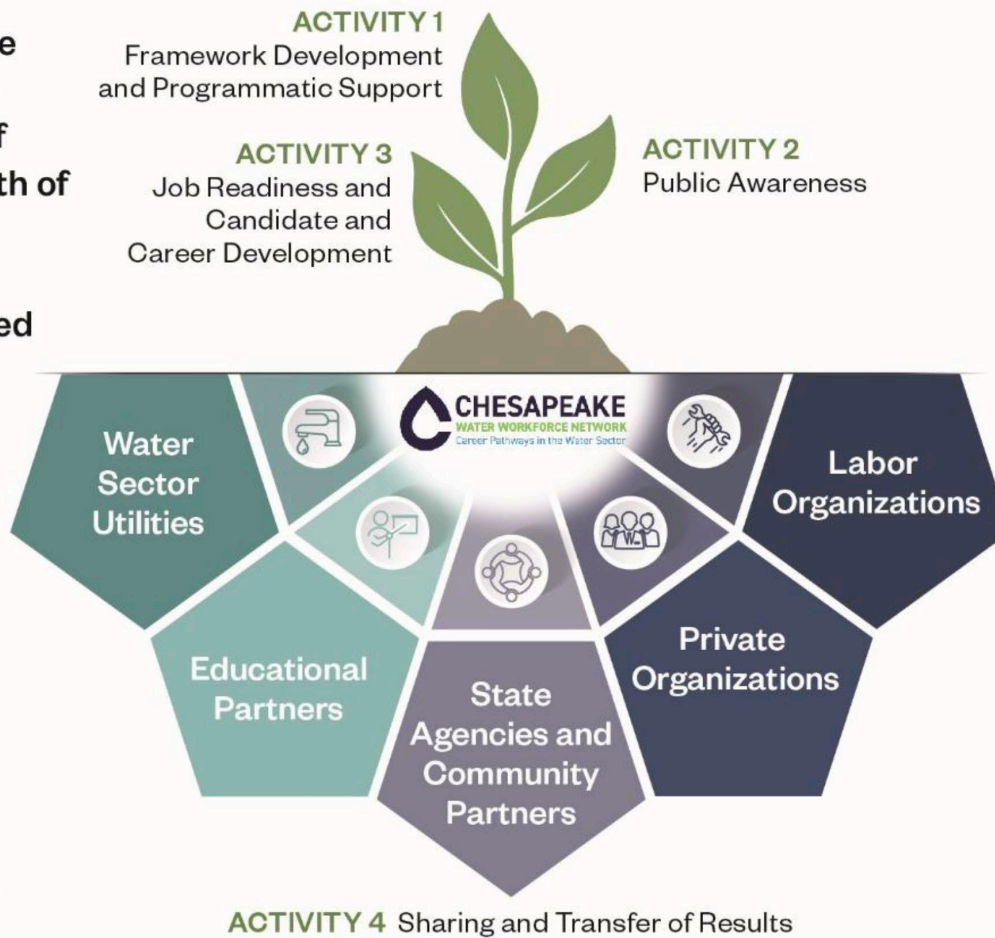


Regional Collaboration for Workforce Development

Our approach to successful development of the Chesapeake Water Workforce Network is to establish a robust ecosystem of partners dedicated to the growth of a vibrant and varied water workforce that engages our underserved and underemployed communities to meet the nation's water resource challenges more effectively now and in the future.

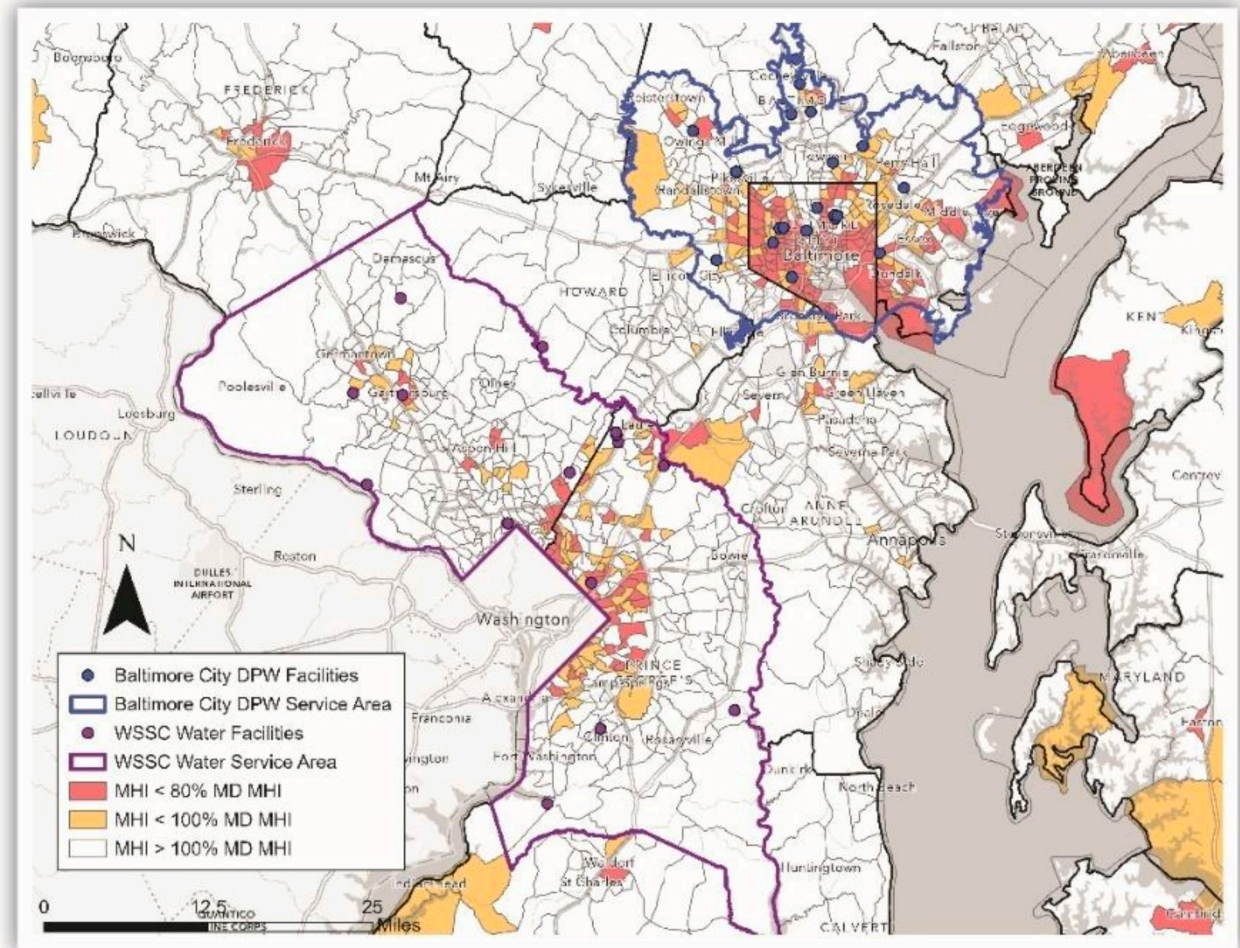
OUR NORTH STAR:

We understand EPA is particularly interested in results produced through this grant program that are scalable and have potential to be utilized by the broader water sector, including water utilities like WSSC Water and Baltimore DPW. We would be signing up for and committed to this collaboration through formation of the network.



Regional Collaboration for Workforce Development

Baltimore DPW and WSSC Water are in areas of the state where socioeconomic disparity amongst the communities served is significant. Many communities that face employment and investment challenges are co-located in the areas where we maintain facilities. **Pairing the need for a larger water workforce with individuals from communities that could directly benefit from skilled and stable employment is our industry's answer to nurturing a diverse, inclusive, and well-supported workforce.**



Regional Collaboration for Workforce Development

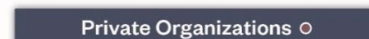


Partners & Roles



Key Tasks

- Needs Assessment
- Public Awareness
- Job Readiness and Candidate and Career Development



- Current partners include:
 - City of Baltimore DPW
 - WSSC Water
 - US Water Alliance
 - Chesapeake Water Environment Association (CWEA)
 - MCET
 - Bowie State University
 - Montgomery College
 - Baltimore City Community College
 - Prince George's Community College
 - Employ Prince George's
 - LARS
 - Mission of Love Charities
 - State of Maryland Department of Labor
 - Teamsters



Toward a Strong and Equitable Water Workforce



US Water Alliance's research reveals 10 common challenges water leaders face in achieving a sustainable workforce transformation:

- Providing sector-wide coordination
- Recruiting job candidates from underrepresented groups
- Addressing capacity differences among utilities
- Targeting mission-critical utility occupations
- Growing awareness and changing negative perceptions of water utility jobs
- Funding workforce efforts
- Eliminating barriers and red tape
- Providing career clarity
- Navigating competition
- Preparing for the future of water management

"Toward a Strong and Equitable Water Workforce"

