

ORDER NO. 2022-05
AN ORDER OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION

To increase the three-year investment in the Youth Career Launch Program from \$2.1 million to \$4.1 million.

ADOPTED
APRIL 12, 2022

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Port of Seattle Commission engaged community stakeholders in a series of 13 listening sessions related to the Port’s role in economic recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During these listening sessions, Commissioners repeatedly heard about the need for additional workforce development efforts, increased visibility of Port industry-related jobs in communities of color, and expanded access to quality, living-wage jobs for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities across King County.

One of the ways the Port has responded to this community call to action is to double down on increasing access to maritime career programs and opportunities. The Commission approved three critical programs for 2022:

- Youth Career Launch Program
- Maritime High School
- Maritime Industry Leadership Table

This programming was matched with \$2.4 million in funding and will support the framework for a comprehensive and connected regional strategy for the future of maritime employment in King County and beyond. This additional investment was identified from cruise revenue that is anticipated to exceed 2022 budget projections.

TEXT OF THE ORDER

The Port Commission directs the Executive Director to increase the three-year investment in the Youth Career Launch Program from \$2.1 million to \$4.1 million. The \$2 million increase in funding will support maritime-focused career launch opportunities and programming.

The Executive Director shall report to the Commission by no later than June 14, 2022, with a draft strategy that identifies collaborations with partner institutions and the resources necessary to connect youth in the Youth Career Launch Program to maritime-focused apprenticeships, post-secondary institutions with paid work-based learning, or secondary career or technical education requirements and other options.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE ORDER

Youth Career Launch Program

The centerpiece of the Port's youth workforce efforts will be the Youth Career Launch Program. The Commission's investment currently totals \$2.1 million over three years. The \$2 million funding increase proposed in this Order will bolster a program that will provide career launch opportunities in the maritime industry for Puget Sound youth and adults aged 16-24 years. This program will focus on youth from historically underrepresented backgrounds (and disproportionately BIPOC) communities and vulnerable populations. This program will:

1. Build partnerships between maritime industry employers with career-connected learning programs;
2. Work collaboratively with regional partners, including government agencies, industry partners and community-based organizations to co-create career connected curriculum based on Port core competencies;
3. In collaboration with industry and workforce partners, identify core competencies and related skills necessary to place interns in entry-level maritime jobs;
4. Leverage the Port funding by partnering, where feasible, with regional stakeholders;
5. Provide training programs for youth to learn those core competencies and skills; and
6. Upon completion of the program, place qualified candidates in a three-month Career Launch internship in an entry-level, living wage position that can lead to consideration for full-time employment by a maritime employer.

From shipbuilding to commercial fishing, to cruise, to logistics and shipping, nearly 70,000 Washingtonians work in the maritime industry. While women and nonbinary workers have been part of the maritime industry for generations, their demographic representation is disproportionately small when compared to men. This lack of representation is particularly concerning in the context of the national maritime labor crisis, where the average age in the maritime workforce is 55. The Port will continue to leverage its position as an anchor institution to expand access to maritime and aviation careers for underrepresented populations.

This impending wave of retirements in the maritime workforce presents a unique opportunity to ensure the next generation of workers in the maritime industry is truly representative of the diversity of King County. The time is ripe to double down on the Port's investment in young women and youth of color.

This order will allocate \$2 million additional focused on maritime programs and opportunities to increase the Port's investment in the Youth Career Launch Program from \$2.1 million to \$4.1 million over three years.

These additional resources will allow the Port to double the number of young people engaged in this program and allow the program to more rapidly achieve its goals while strengthening the region's maritime career pipeline.

This Youth Career Launch Program will also be conducted as part of the evolving strategic plan for OEDI that will include research to better understand the current and future workforce needs

across the maritime industry in our region. Program development will include means to measure and monitor outcomes in ways that help provide transparency while also respecting that breaking barriers can mean transformative approaches to how data is collected and analyzed as well.