

April 27, 2016



## Notes from Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 14, Session 6

This was the sixth session of PLC Cycle 14 that will feature informal, 20-minute discussions with EPA EWDJT grantees, alumni, and interested stakeholders. The goals for this new cycle include:

- Highlighting EWDJT programs, and identifying successes and challenges
- Exploring proven strategies and activities used by established EWDJT programs
- Discovering resources and leveraging opportunities
- Helpful hints and open discussion

Topics: 1. News from Washington and HMTRI  
2. Questions from PLC participants  
3. LA Conservation Corps  
4. Making connections, networking, and items of interest  
5. Opportunities

### **1. News from Washington and HMTRI**

The long wait is almost over. EPA has indicated that they anticipate announcing the grantees for the 2016 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) program on May 12, 2016. Best wishes to all who have applied.

The [HMTRI Annual Grantee Update Webinar](#) was held Tuesday, April 19, 2016. The topic was *Getting the Most Out of ACRES*. ACRES stands for the Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System. This is an online reporting form that must be completed by every Brownfields grantee including EWDJT grantees.

ACRES provides the EPA Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR) an analytical system to track and measure performance of all the grants under various Brownfields programs. For EWDJT grantees, reporting is fairly simple. The following information is requested on a quarterly basis:

- Number of applicants entering the EWDJT program
- Number of participants completing the EWDJT program
- Number of Veteran applicants entering the program
- Starting salaries
- Leveraging information

Grantees have found the following issues most challenging with ACRES:

- The password changes every 90 days and must be re-established (basically for every report).
- Gathering and compiling leveraging information can be subjective and challenging.
- The reports are required every quarter in addition to the regular quarterly progress reports submitted to regional coordinators.

ACRES training will be held at the Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting for new grantees and refresher training for current grantees.

REMINDER: Active PLC participants are invited to the Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting on August 17–18, 2016. Lodging costs for three nights and meeting fees are provided. Participants must cover travel and meal expenses.

This meeting is a networking and sharing event attended by:

- Current EPA-funded EWDJT grantees
- Past EWDJT grantees
- PLC members
- EPA regional coordinators
- EPA headquarters staff

Contact Glo Hanne for registration and information at [ghanne@eicc.edu](mailto:ghanne@eicc.edu).

## 2. Questions from PLC participants

*"I'm just curious. Denise and Gabi mentioned that setting up an advisory board was integral to their success with their program. Have you had any call topics that discussed the mechanics or value pro used to set up advisory boards?"*

Absolutely. We have had many discussions and will have many in the future regarding advisory boards. Perhaps the two most important activities undertaken by successful grantees are the development of strong partnerships and the establishment of active (not token), participatory advisory boards. Working advisory boards provide the following contributions to EWDJT programs:

- Direction regarding job skills in demand (labor market assessment)
- Curriculum guidance
- Potential employer leads
- Advice on leveraging opportunities
- Mentoring for program participants
- Experience and expertise in environmental remediation
- Assistance in marketing and awareness (networking support)
- Linkage to target communities
- ...and the list goes on...

It is important to choose motivated advisory board members who have a variety of experiences and skills with frequent meetings. We will address advisory boards more in future PLC sessions.

## 3. LA Conservation Corps—Gaby Jimenez and Denise Haynes

Thanks, Gaby and Denise, for your informative presentation.

The primary mission the LA Conservation Corps (LACC) is to provide at-risk young adults and school-aged youth with opportunities for success through job skills training, education, and work experience with an emphasis on conservation and service projects that benefit the community. There are over 100 Corps with representation in every state. Some are small, and some are larger with expanded services to the community. Many have expanded beyond service to youth and young adults.

In the Los Angeles area, LACC has brought together several programs under a single umbrella organization. Leveraging and sharing resources allows each program to be stronger and offer more services than each could by themselves.

LACC has been in existence for 30 years. But expansion programs such as Youth Build, the EWDJT program, and the Brownfields Minority Worker Training Program are less than have half that age (still an impressive longevity).

LACC began offering YouthBuild in 2002 in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), and the Center to Protect Workers' Rights, LACC has offered Brownfields-related programs since 2001.

Organizationally, LACC locates construction and environmental programs within a larger Young Adult Corps. The EWDJT program offers specialized vocational training in the emerging green sector and environmental remediation fields. "Young Adult" is not applicable to the EPA program in that all ages qualify for participation in the program.

LACC has successfully competed for six EWDJT grants providing consistently impressive results.

#### Program overview

LACC works in south LA. Compton has one of the highest crime communities in the country with the largest population of incarcerated and ex-offenders. The poverty rate ranges from 20 to 35 percent with massive flight and plant closures a challenge to the quality of life for community residents.

LACC's goal is to train 60 students, place 48 graduates in environmental jobs, and track graduates for at least one year.

#### Labor Market Assessment

LACC relies heavily on their advisory board to stay relevant to local job opportunities. Labor market assessments also projected growth for the following occupations:

- Hazardous materials removal workers
- Forklift operators
- Materials handlers
- Insulator workers with hazardous materials training

Employers surveyed anticipated hiring workers trained in the following occupations:

- Healthy home construction (including lead and asbestos remediation)
- Hazardous waste and recycling
- Transportation
- Hazardous substances remediation

### Core curriculum

In response to advisory board recommendations and labor market assessments, the core training program includes 161 hours of core instruction. Participants who complete the core instruction will earn four state or federal certifications in addition to life-skills education.

- 40-hour HAZWOPER
- Lead remediation
- Asbestos abatement
- 10-hour CA OSHA site worker safety
- Storm water management
- Health and safety
- CPR/first aid
- Performance Institute basic building science

An additional 99 leveraged hours of life-skills training includes:

- Anger management
- Resume building and job search instruction
- General life skills
- Financial literacy (offered by local financial institutions)

### Target community

The following plant closures have left over 350 brownfields and leaking underground storage tanks:

- Tire plants
- Chemical manufacturers
- Fertilizer companies
- Crude oil refineries
- Stockyards
- Meat packing plants
- Lumber mill

### Target population

LACC is targeting unemployed and underemployed residents in south Los Angeles including those with the following circumstances:

- Long-term unemployed
- Homeless individuals
- Veterans
- Ex-offenders

### Key partners

- City of Los Angeles Brownfields program
- North San Fernando Valley WorkSource Centers (Workforce Investment Board)
- SHIELDS for Families
- Joint Apprenticeship Trust (Local 5)

- Los Angeles Trade and Technical College
- Compton Creek Task Force
- Community-based organizations
- Environmental employers

#### Recruitment and screening

LACC relies heavily and receives leveraged services from the local job centers. Initial screening, recruitment, student services, and placement supplements leveraged WIB participation. Potential applicants must participate in orientation and one-on one interviews. They are scored on a 1–10 basis with those having the highest ranking and motivation selected for further review and medical screening.

Applicants must have the following attributes to be accepted into the EWDJT program:

- Must be and must remain drug-free
- Must have a high school diploma
- Must pass a medical screening including x-ray and stress test

Ex-offenders and those on parole are welcome.

LACC is outstanding in the use of their advisory board and partner organizations. The Joint Apprenticeship Trust (Local 5) provides pathways into union membership while other employer advisors and partners provide alternative pathways to sustainable jobs. Representatives from the community, local government, and financial institutions act as advisors and provide leverage resources to the program. Local banks, for example, provide financial literacy instruction. Union organizations are utilized for training and introduction to pre-apprentice programs. LACC provides an excellent example of using advisors, an advisory board, and partners to maximize program effectiveness.

Those interested in teaming up with larger organizations like the Conservation Corp may contact Gabby or Denise.

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 Los Angeles, CA 90012  
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#### **4. Making connections, networking, and items of interest**

##### 2016 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting

August 17–18, 2016

Travel days: August 16 and August 19

Holiday Inn & Suites  
 Alexandria, VA 22314

The *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* is a networking and break-out event attended by:

- Current EPA-funded Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grantees
- Past EWDJT grantees
- PLC members
- EPA regional workforce development coordinators
- EPA headquarters staff

Reservation deadline is Tuesday, July 26, 2016. For additional information or questions contact Glo Hanne at [ghanne@eicc.edu](mailto:ghanne@eicc.edu).

#### Second Southeast Brownfields Conference

Save the date: October 16–19, 2016

Omni Downtown Hotel, Jacksonville, FL

Event hosted and organized by the Florida Brownfields Association with regional partners.

#### The Annual Great Environmental Safety Training (GreatEST) Institute

June 6–17, 2016, in Davenport, Iowa

The annual Great Environmental Safety Training (GreatEST) Institute is a 10-day train-the-trainer program that delivers the required certifications for public and private responders and workers including:

- 40-Hour Waste Site Worker Health and Safety
- 24-Hour Industrial Emergency Response
- DOT HazMat
- Hazard Awareness and Communication

Participants must apply and be approved to attend this training sponsored under an NIEHS grant to the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE). The deadline to submit your application is February 29, 2016. For more information, contact Patti Thompson at [pattijthompson@gmail.com](mailto:pattijthompson@gmail.com).

#### 2016 Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference

June 6, 2016

Cleveland, Ohio

Registration is now open for the 2016 Good Jobs, Green Jobs conference. The conference is about investing in America. Good Jobs, Green Jobs affords an opportunity to join with labor, environmental, business, and community leaders to forge the links between the economic possibilities created through protecting the environment and solving climate change.

Early registration is open (\$199) at <http://www.greenjobsconference.org>.

#### Annual Georgia Environmental Conference

August 24–26, 2016

Jekyll Island, Georgia

In its 11th year, the Annual Georgia Environmental Conference is the state's largest, most comprehensive and diverse educational opportunity. The conference will be attended by over 700 local, state, and federal government officials, business and industry leaders, attorneys, consultants,

engineers, developers, land owners, architects, agribusiness leaders, energy experts, water planning districts, universities, public health officials, solid waste, enviro-tech, recycling experts, and many, many others with a strong interest in environmental activities in Georgia and the Southeast region.

## 5. Opportunities

### Career and job postings

Brownfield Renewal allows you to search for your perfect position, from internship to planning director, and keep track of your searches at <http://www.brownfieldrenewal.com/jobs.html>.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session:        May 11, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. ET  
Please call in five minutes early.

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at [msenew@aol.com](mailto:msenew@aol.com).



Visit our *HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs. All PLC session notes and recordings are also located on the *Brownfields Toolbox* website at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Glo Hanne at [ghanne@eicc.edu](mailto:ghanne@eicc.edu).

**NOTE:** The PLC brings together ideas and opinions of individuals interested in environmental workforce development and training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA, its policy or opinions and should not be taken as official guidance.