

July 27, 2016



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 15, Session 2

This was the second session of PLC Cycle 15 that features informal, 20-minute discussions with EPA EWDJT grantees, alumni, and interested stakeholders. The goals for this 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

Topics:

1. News from Washington and HMTRI
2. Questions
3. Coalfield Development Corporation
Social Entrepreneurship (Presentation slides included)
4. Upcoming webinars
5. Making connections, networking, and meetings
6. Opportunities

1. News from Washington and HMTRI

Important: All PLC participants are invited to the *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* on August 17–18, 2016. You are invited as a PLC member, especially if you did not receive an award this cycle. Participants must cover travel to Alexandria, VA plus some meals. Hotel and meeting fees are provided. Contact Glo Hanne at gghanne@eicc.edu for registration information. We were able to get the hotel deadline extended to **Tuesday, August 2**.

The All-Grantee Meeting is less than three weeks away. If you would like to share program materials with fellow grantees and with EPA, we need your materials this week. Please send materials to Mike Senew at mksenew@aol.com. PDF format is preferred.

If you have color brochures or something similar that is not electronic, please bring 130 copies to share. No duplicating will be done onsite. Some examples of materials may include but are not limited to:

- Program summaries
- Brochures
- Successes and failures of your program
- Curriculum
- Recruitment and/or placement materials
- Administrative forms and/or applications
- Survey forms
- Certificates
- Progress reports
- Anything else you would like to share

2. Questions

A question from a PLC member: “I missed the EPA webinar titled ‘Leveraging Resources for Brownfields Revitalization’ on July 26. Are copies of the presentation available?”

Yes. It was an excellent webinar discussing 14 steps to securing leveraged funding facilitated by Patricia Overmeyer, EPA OBLR. This was the first of OBLR’s webinar series focusing on what communities need to do to successfully leverage resources for brownfields revitalization. Later in these notes are announcements for future webinars on this topic.

A complete archive of this seminar is available along with hundreds of other archived internet seminars for free download and replay at <http://www.clu-in.org/live/archive/>. You may also go to related links and resources at <https://clu-in.org/conf/tio/BFLeveraging1/default.cfm#tabs-4>.

3. Coalfield Development Corporation, Social Entrepreneurship

Thank you, Brandon Dennison, for your presentation today.

Before we get into a summary of Coalfield Development Corporation’s (Coalfield) environmental workforce training program, an introduction to this unique program is in order. The target community is an example of a rural community decimated by the loss their primary employer and income source. West Virginia has the nation’s highest unemployment rate, lowest labor participation rate, and second lowest higher education rate. The southern portion of the state has been especially hit hard.

While southern West Virginia is one of the most visible communities impacted by mine and plant closures, other rural communities across the country are experiencing similar hardships with the closure of their primary employers. It may be coal, steel, chemicals, oil, technology, or exported manufacturing. The disruption is the same. Few jobs, fewer employers, and little hope for future prosperity.

Coalfield is on a path to address these issues and EPA’s Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) program is part of the solution. The information below has been taken from the [Coalfield Development Corporation](#) website.

Coalfields “Theory of Change”

“Without spirit, without willpower, without opportunities for overcoming structural barriers, a full life feels unattainable. It is the Coalfield Development Corporation’s (Coalfield) belief that the cause of so many woes in Southern West Virginia is the lack of full lives being lived—the emptiness, the despair built up over generations, which leads to a lack of ambition, gumption, and an inability to dream. Therefore, simply building a new home for a person or giving them a two-year job is not sufficient for smashing down structural barriers and ending generational cycles of poverty. Rather, opportunities for full lives must be provided. As such, the primary strategy of this program and of Coalfield overall is to provide valuable, varied, and empowering opportunities for low-income young adults in Southern West Virginia.

“Our responsibility is to create opportunity, then to provide encouragement and build the self-confidence necessary for pursuing opportunity. When given true opportunities (not just charity or any minimum wage job) and when self-confidence is restored (which requires patience), people will better their own lives and discover what a full life means for them personally.

“Coalfield’s mission is to be a community-based organization that provides quality and affordable homes, creates quality jobs, and generates opportunities for quality life for low income families in Southern West Virginia.”

“It was formed in 2009 by local citizen leaders concerned that the people of Wayne County lacked adequate access to quality, affordable housing. However, the organization was, at first, very slow to develop having only volunteers to do its work. In 2010, Executive Director Brandon Dennison, first as a CommunityWorks in West Virginia Housing intern and then as a volunteer director, became intimately involved with this organizing effort. Since then, Coalfield has rapidly expanded its efforts under Dennison's leadership into the regional entity it is today (having recently expanded into Lincoln and Mingo Counties), going from a donated corner in the Wayne County Commission Office, to an overflowing apartment unit serving as an ad-hoc office with a leaking roof, to a yet-to-be-determined new location (which hopefully will have a better roof).”

In 2015, Coalfield received their first EPA EWDJT grant. The program is new and the first cohort has been completed with 15 of 17 graduates placed in full time jobs.

Program overview

Target Community

Coalfield is targeting underemployed and unemployed residents of Cabell, Wayne, Lincoln, and Mingo Counties in West Virginia, with an emphasis on young adults, veterans, and coal miners living in areas environmentally degraded by coal mining. This target community represents the part of the state most impacted by water and mountain top coal mining regulations.

Recruitment and Placement

From the first cohort of 17 graduates, 15 have been placed in full-time jobs including green construction, solar installation, water pumping, parks and recreation, and manufacturing. The overall plan calls for:

- Recruitment of 72 students.
- Placement of 63 graduates.
- Tracking of graduates for three years.

Some of the graduates will find employment in one of the six organizations that comprise Coalfield (described below in the leveraging and sustainability section).

Core Curriculum

The guiding vision for Coalfield’s training is the 33–6–3 program: 33 hours of on-the-job training, 6 hours in the classroom, and 3 hours per week in the classroom. Training is coupled with a 12–12 reflection. Twelve on personal attitude (mandatory for employment and excellence), and 12 for care (of self and others).

Trainees participate in environmental job training on two levels: basic and advanced. EWDJT participants can participate in either program. Both levels provide life skills training, job shadowing, and internships in addition to construction skills training.

Advanced Training Level

- Participants complete 218 hours of EPA-funded environmental training as well as have the opportunity to earn an Associate's Degree in Applied Science from Southern Community & Technical College or Mountwest Community & Technical College, applicable licenses and professional certifications, and valuable on-the-job experience.
- The advanced technical training program covers 218 hours of classroom instruction, including the following core coursework:
 - OSHA HAZWOPER 40-hours
 - Lead
 - Asbestos abatement
 - Lead renovation, repair, and painting
 - Mold awareness
 - Methamphetamine lab cleanup
 - Chemical inventory
 - Storage and handling
 - Site surveying and blueprint reading
 - Job readiness and life skills training courses leveraged by partners and available to all participants
 - Seven state/federal certifications and licenses

Learning Training Level

- Participants gain a working knowledge of job related environmental issues that will provide them an opportunity to earn applicable state, federal, and professional certifications. For Learning Level participants, the HAZWOPER course is required. They are also required to participate in case management, professional skills development counseling, and job placement services which will be provided to all participants whether Advanced or Learning Level.

Key partners

- Coalfield coordinates within its six operational units.
- Marshall University Center for environmental, geotechnical, and applied sciences
- Mountwest Community and Technical College
- Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
- Coalition for Homeless Veterans
- West Virginia Region 2 Workforce Investment Board
- Wayne County Economic Development Authority
- Southern West Virginia Community Action Agency
- Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, Veterans Employment Council
- Environmental- and community-based organizations

Leveraging and sustainability

Coalfield was organized on the principles of mentorship, on-the-job training, higher education, social enterprise, innovation, community collaboration, and entrepreneurial leadership. These principles set the direction and guide the organization, providing jobs and sustainable opportunities for community residents.

Coalfield creates its own jobs with ongoing operations in each the following areas:

- Reawaken Appalachia—Real estate development
- Revitalize Appalachia—Construction development
- Reclaim Appalachia—Environmental remediation
- Refresh Appalachia—Sustainable agriculture
- Rediscover Appalachia—Creative place making
- Rewire Appalachia—Solar installation

EWDJT participants and grantees are provided internships, job shadowing, and job opportunities in any of the Coalfield endeavors. While not yet self-sufficient, Coalfield is well on its way to benefitting the community, the residents, and the environment.

Those interested in contacting Brandon regarding Coalfield and their 33–6–3 training program may contact him using the contact information below. Brandon will be presenting at the *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting*.

Brandon M. Dennison, CEO
Coalfield Development Corporation
P.O. Box 1133
Wayne, WV 25570
304.501.4755

www.coalfield-development.org

4. Upcoming webinars

Environmental Justice Access & Awareness Webinar Series

“Federal Agencies Convening for Environmental Justice: Connecting Communities to Green Space, Healthcare, and Jobs”

August 11, 2016 from 1:00pm–2:30pm EDT

Established by Executive Order 12898, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG) comprises 17 federal agencies and White House Offices that work together to guide, support, and enhance environmental justice and community-based activities.

The EJ IWG is launching the Access & Awareness Series, a monthly event, to provide public access to the working group and to increase community awareness of federal agency environmental justice strategies and holistic community-based solutions to address environmental justice issues. This series will help the public gain a deeper understanding of how federal agencies are collaborating and what resources are available to anyone interested in improving the health, quality-of-life, and economic opportunities in overburdened communities.

The first webinar of the series, “Federal Agencies Convening for Environmental Justice: Connecting Communities to Green Space, Healthcare and Jobs,” will provide an introduction to the Environmental Justice Interagency Working Group established in 1994 under Executive Order 12898 and chaired by the Environmental Protection Agency. It will highlight three innovative federal projects with presentations from the Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Labor; and the Department of the Interior, National Parks Service. These presentations will highlight agency programs and how they integrate important EJ principles to target underserved and overburdened communities.

Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/federal-agencies-convening-for-environmental-justice-connecting-communities-to-green-space-tickets-26760830364>. After you register, you will be emailed with information on how to access the webinar.

Leveraging Resources for Brownfields Revitalization: Meet the Funders
Webinar Series (#2)

October 25, 2016, 1:00–2:30 pm EDT

This webinar will highlight the resources for brownfields revitalization available from one or two federal agencies outside of EPA. It is the second in OBLR's webinar series on what communities need to know to successfully leverage resources for brownfields revitalization.

Register at <https://clu-in.org/training/webinar/BFLeveraging1/>.

Leveraging Resources for Brownfields Revitalization: Meet the Funders
Webinar Series (#3)

December 14, 2016, 1:00-2:30 pm EST

This second “Meet the Funders” webinar will highlight the resources for brownfields revitalization available from one or two more federal agencies outside of EPA. It is the part of OBLR's webinar series focusing on what communities need to do to successfully leverage resources for brownfields revitalization.

Register at <https://clu-in.org/training/webinar/BFLeveraging1/>.

5. Making connections, networking, and meetings

2016 West Virginia Brownfields Conference

September 7–8, 2016

Register for the 2016 WV Brownfields Conference taking place on September 7–8 at the Marriott Town Center in Charleston, West Virginia. The event will include sessions covering all aspects of brownfields redevelopment, interactive workshops, specialty training on remediation, two networking receptions, and the inaugural Central Appalachian Regional Brownfields Summit on September 8.

Follow <http://wvbrownfields.org/2016-conference/> to learn more and to register.

Make a connection at the ICMA Job Center

The ICMA Job Center offers a direct market to ICMA's members, the largest audience of dedicated local government professionals across the United States and internationally, and thousands of nonmembers interested in careers in local government service. Attracting more than 12,000 unique visitors each month, it's the only job board devoted to management and management-track positions.

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.

Second Annual Southeast Brownfields Conference

October 16–19, 2016

Jacksonville, FL

Hosted by the Florida Brownfields Association and its regional partners, the Second Annual Southeast Brownfields Conference will be taking place in Jacksonville, Florida on October 16–19. Over 200 brownfield practitioners were in attendance last year and gained valuable insight into redevelopment practices in the southeast region. Registration is now open. Topics selected for the conference proceedings will emphasize Brownfields-related topics and case studies including but not limited to:

- Brownfield Redevelopment Success Stories
- Public Outreach and Changing the Perception of Brownfields
- State, Tribal, and Local Programs and Partnerships (Community Engagement)
- Obtaining and Managing Brownfields Grants
- Brownfield Incentives
- Sustainable Brownfields Redevelopment
- Redevelopment Financing
- Environmental Justice and Public Health
- Local, State, and Federal Regulatory and Policy Changes and the Effects on Brownfields
- Due Diligence, Liability Protection, Long-term Stewardship, and Risk Management
- Innovative Assessment and Remediation Technologies
- Brownfield End-Use Planning

The deadline for the Call for Presentation abstracts is July 1, 2016. For more details, visit <http://www.floridabrownfields.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.

6. Opportunities

We like to include requests for proposals for Brownfields-related funding opportunities as it is important for EWDJT grantees to contact those involved with similar programs. Check with City of County economic development staff to learn if they plan to participate in any of the funding announcements below.

FY 2017 Brownfields Area-Wide Planning (BF AWP) Grant Guidelines

EPA is announcing the availability of funding to eligible entities who wish to develop an area-wide plan for Brownfields assessment, cleanup, and subsequent reuse. This funding is for research and/or technical assistance activities directed to one or more Brownfields site(s) located in a specific area (such as a neighborhood, downtown or business district, local commercial corridor, community waterfront, or city blocks). Each project funded under this grant must result in an area-wide plan which includes specific plan implementation strategies for assessing, cleaning up, and reusing the Brownfields site(s) as well as related Brownfields and project area revitalization strategies. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 20 projects in total, funded at up to \$200,000 each. The proposal submission deadline is August 10, 2016.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: August 10, 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.



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.

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.