

November 19, 2014

Notes from Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 11, Session 10

This was the tenth and last session in a series of PLC Cycle 11.

Topics: Current Happenings / Updates from Washington as of November 19, 2014

Featured Guest: Limitless Vistas, Inc., New Orleans, LA

Things to do Before Requests for Proposals are Issued

Using the HMTRI Listserve

2015 National Brownfields Conference—Call for Ideas

Networking Opportunities

Health and Safety Training for Grantee Trainers—CCCHST GreatEST Institute

Funding and Coordination Opportunities

### **Current Happenings / Updates from Washington as of November 19, 2014**

The FY2015 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program (EWDJT) RFP should be issued any day. We will forward the announcement as soon as it is issued. Organizations not familiar with using grants.gov need to research the site as soon as possible as it takes some time and effort for first time users to sign up. All applicants will be required to submit through grants.gov.

EPA will conduct a repeat webinar addressing the Grant Application Guidelines/Request for Proposals (RFP) on December 4, 2014, from 2:00–4:00pm EST.

#### Adobe Connect Webinar #2

December 4, 2014

2:00–4:00pm EST

Call-in number: (866) 299-3188, conference code: 2025662772#

Summary: This webinar will provide an overview of the Fiscal Year 2015 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) Grant Application Guidelines/Request for Proposals (RFP) and competition. Prospective applicants will be provided an opportunity to ask questions and gain useful information for submitting a strong proposal. Changes from the FY14 EWDJT competition will also be covered.

To join the meeting, please go to <https://epa.connectsolutions.com/ewdjt2014/>. We have posted a copy of the PowerPoint presentation on the Brownfields Toolbox website at [www.brownfields-toolbox.org](http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org). Click on the banner at the top of the page.

### **Featured Guest: Limitless Vistas, Inc., New Orleans, LA—Rebuilding after disaster**

Thank you Patrick, Sherry, and Christina for your informative presentation.

#### Background

Patrick Barnes is part owner of BFA Environmental, one of this country's largest minority-owned remediation firms. When Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans in 2005, levee failures inundated the city with fuel, sewage, chemicals from oil spills, pesticides, and hazardous waste. Hurricane Rita and the BP oil spill added to the environmental degradation. BFA Environmental responded to these disasters, training and employing over one hundred local residents to assist in cleanup efforts.

Patrick's interest in training in association with environmental cleanup led him to Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana, Inc. where together they received an EWDJT grant in 2008. Recognizing the value this program brought to community residents, Patrick formed a partnership of community, governmental, and private stakeholders to submit a revised EWDJT proposal in 2010. Limitless Vistas Inc. has been training and placing strong ever since.

Limitless Vistas Inc. is special because of its origins and close relationship to private sector and municipal employers. The use of leveraged stipends, training, and internships with hands on student experiences make Limitless Vista, Inc. stand out among EWDJT programs. Their approach to placing water/wastewater graduates is especially noteworthy.

#### Targeted Community

Gert Town and Central City were two of the most vulnerable neighborhoods impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. An estimated 94.5 percent of Gert Town residents are African-American, and 48.6 percent of the residents live in poverty.

Limitless Vistas is targeting unemployed or under-employed residents of New Orleans' Gert Town and Central City neighborhoods. They recruit disadvantaged youth, ex-offenders, veterans, and low-income minorities.

#### Path to EWDJT

- 2008—Partnered with Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana, Inc. to receive the initial EWDJT grant.
- 2010—Applied for and received the first EPA EWDJT grant under Limitless Vistas, Inc.
- 2012—Re-competed and awarded a second stimulus EPA EWDJT grant.
- 2014—Re-competed and awarded its current EPA EWDJT grant.

#### Leveraged Resources

- AmeriCorps
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Corps
- "My Brother's Keeper"
- Private remediation and consulting organizations
- Training from remediation consultants
- Leveraged stipends and internships
- Life skills training from other nonprofit organizations

#### Key Partners

- New Orleans Workforce Investment Board
- Regional Brownfields Commission
- New Orleans Mayor's Office of Workforce Development
- New Orleans Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs
- The Corps Network
- Community-based organizations
- Environmental employers

### Program Challenge

Limitless Vistas plans to train and place 50 students under the current grant, placing graduates in sustainable, long-term employment.

### Core Training Program

The core training program includes 370 hours of instruction. Participants who complete the core training will earn eight state or federal certifications in addition to life skills training.

- HAZWOPER 40-hr, OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120
- Water/Wastewater
- Emergency Response
- Environmental Site Assessment
- Wetlands and Coastal Restoration
- DOT Hazardous Waste
- Asbestos Contractor Supervisor
- Lead Paint Awareness
- Solid Waste Management and Cleanup
- OSHA 10-hour Construction
- Alternative Energy Sources
- Underground Storage Tank Remediation
- Life Skills (leveraged)

### Student Recruitment

Recruitment using flyers and referrals provide a pool of qualified applicants. Graduates and reputation provide the best vehicle for student recruitment.

### Training Delivery, Services, and Retention

Training includes hands-on experiences with opportunities for leveraged stipends and internships.

### Graduate Placement and Tracking

Close relationships with employers and opportunities for internships provide the best vehicles for placing graduates in entry-level water/wastewater jobs. Limitless Vistas works with municipal water/wastewater organizations to provide internships for program participants.

### Summary Notes

The greatest need creates the greatest opportunities. Potential EWDJT programs need to seek out and identify local needs.

### Contact and Additional Information

Sherry, Christina, or Patrick would be happy to discuss issues associated with Limitless Vistas including the use of internships as a placement strategy for water and wastewater jobs.

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[scallaway@limitlessvistas.org](mailto:scallaway@limitlessvistas.org)

## Things to do Before Requests for Proposals are Issued

Assessment and Cleanup grants proposals are due December 19. If possible, connect with those involved in these programs. (See announcement below.)

1. Contact your EPA Regional Coordinator before RFP's are issued. Coordinators will not be able to discuss specific grants after the RFP is issued. Regional Coordinator contact information is at the end of these notes.
2. Assess your community.
  - a. Check out the competition—who trains locally?
  - b. Search employers as potential partners, mentors, and program contributors.
  - c. Research local government.
    - Find contacts in the Office of Economic Development.
    - Locate Brownfields contacts in state and local Departments of Natural Resources.
    - Become familiar with locally funded Department of Labor programs.
3. Consider potential partners—those to partner with and those to coordinate and inform.
4. Search out organizations with federal grant and training experience as potential partners/mentors.
5. Review last year's Request for Proposals—minor changes will be made in this year's review criteria.
6. If a previous submission was not funded, contact your EPA Regional Coordinator for a review before the RFP is issued.
7. Research previous grants or proposals for local Area-Wide Planning Grants, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, or Cleanup grants. Coordinate with stakeholders in these grants.
8. Start developing a stakeholder network.
9. Sign up for Brownfields 2015—It's not too early. [www.brownfieldsconference.org](http://www.brownfieldsconference.org)
10. If you would like to invite a guest to the next Environmental Job Development and Training Professional Learning Community (PLC) call, feel free to forward this email.
11. Check out the Brownfields Toolbox website at [www.brownfields-toolbox.org](http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org). Those interested in providing content or suggestions are encouraged to contact Glo at: [ghanne@eicc.edu](mailto:ghanne@eicc.edu)

### EPA Regional Job Training Coordinators

Region 1—Kathleen Castagna, 617.918.1429, [castagna.kathleen@epa.gov](mailto:castagna.kathleen@epa.gov)

Region 2—Schenine Mitchell, 212.637.3282, [mitchell.schenine@epa.gov](mailto:mitchell.schenine@epa.gov)

Region 3—Jeff Barnett, 215.814.3246, [barnett.jeff@epa.gov](mailto:barnett.jeff@epa.gov)

Region 4—Kathleen Curry, 404.229.6354, [curry.kathleen@epa.gov](mailto:curry.kathleen@epa.gov)

Region 5—Linda Morgan, 312.886.4747, [morgan.linda@epa.gov](mailto:morgan.linda@epa.gov)

Region 6—Amber Perry, 214.665.3172, [perry.amber@epa.gov](mailto:perry.amber@epa.gov)

Region 7—Alma Moreno-Lahm, 913.551.7380, [lahm.alma@epa.gov](mailto:lahm.alma@epa.gov)

Region 8—Christina Wilson, 303.312.6706, [wilson.christina@epa.gov](mailto:wilson.christina@epa.gov)

Region 9—Noemi Emeric-Ford, 213.244.1821, [meric-ford.noemi@epa.gov](mailto:meric-ford.noemi@epa.gov)

Region 10—Robert Tan, 206.553.2580, [tan.robert@epa.gov](mailto:tan.robert@epa.gov)

### **Using the HMTRI Listserve**

The EWDJT Grantee ListServe has been updated to include all of the new grantees who attended the last *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* in Alexandria, VA. For some of you, this is new information. For others, this is a reminder of the benefits of using this ListServe as a networking tool.

Using this ListServe is just like sending a normal email. The only difference is that a single email address includes many recipients. Members of this ListServe include attendees of this year's All-Grantee meeting and past grantee meetings. The email address to use to post a message to this ListServe is [jtgrantees@ateec.org](mailto:jtgrantees@ateec.org). You may want to add this to your email address book.

When you send an email to the ListServe, you will receive an automated response telling you that your message is waiting for approval by the moderator. The ListServe is set up this way to prevent spam and automated Outlook Office Assistant messages from being sent to all members. The moderator is me. I attend to these approvals as quickly as possible.

### **2015 National Brownfields Training Conference**

The 2015 National Brownfields Training Conference will be held in Chicago, IL, September 2–4, 2015. The Conference will be held at the Chicago Hilton on Michigan Ave. Additional meeting space and sleeping rooms will be available at the Palmer House Hilton. Please visit the Conference Website for additional information at [www.brownfieldsconference.org](http://www.brownfieldsconference.org).

The deadline for session proposal submission has been EXTENDED until December 8, 2014! What do YOU want to see at Brownfields 2015?

What Topics Are Included in the Program?

The Brownfields 2015 Planning Committee is particularly interested in topics related to:

- Environmental assessment and cleanup
- Traditional and innovative financing approaches
- Marketing, real estate and economic development
- Planning strategies for better communities
- Incorporating sustainability into redevelopment activities
- Civic and community engagement
- Addressing liability and enforcement issues
- State, tribal and local partnerships

HMTRI has submitted a request to conduct a roundtable session for EWDJT grantees. We would like to organize an open discussion with all our EWDJT grantees and interested stakeholders.

EPA grantees are encouraged to submit ideas showcasing their individual accomplishments and good work.

### **Networking Opportunities**

#### Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015

The Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference will begin on April 13, 2015, at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Registration will open soon, but for now, make sure you're free to join hundreds of labor, environmental, business, non-profit, and civic leaders for Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015.

### **Health and Safety Training for Grantee Trainers—CCCHST GreatEST Institute**

Many of you are familiar with the CCCHST GreatEST Institute, the annual two-week Train-the-Trainer sponsored by HMTRI's partner, the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE). Many of you have been selected to attend in past years.

The 2015 dates have been confirmed. The Institute is for your trainers only. This is not a first come/first served program. Applications will be reviewed by a team who will select participants based on the trainer's experience, and the entity's affiliations, and projected number of students to be trained.

The 2015 applications are available on the PETE website at <http://nationalpete.org/>.

### **Funding and Coordination Opportunities**

#### EPA Awards 2014 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreements

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced competitive cooperative agreements with 12 community-based organizations working to address environmental justice issues nationwide. The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJCPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding for nonprofit and tribal organizations to partner with stakeholders from across industry, government, and academia to develop and implement solutions that significantly address environmental and/or public health issues in American communities.

"These cooperative agreements empower communities to implement environmental protection projects locally," said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. "With these agreements, EPA advances our commitment to communities by providing financial and technical assistance to take action against environmental harm."

In 2003, EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) launched the first solicitation for the EJCPS Cooperative Agreement Program. Since the Program's inception, EPA has provided funding to 50 projects to help communities understand and address exposure to environmental harms and risks. Each of this year's recipients are awarded up to \$120,000 to support two-year projects, including identifying and reducing sources of air pollution, reducing lead exposure in homes of low-income residents, and the cleanup and repurposing of community dump sites. Projects must use the Collaborative Problem Solving model, comprised of seven elements of a successful collaborative partnership, to address local environmental and/or public health issues.

Environmental justice is defined as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race or income, in the environmental decision-making process. These awards represent EPA's commitment to promoting localized, community-based actions to address environmental justice issues.

Please visit <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/grants/cps-project-abstracts-2014.pdf> for a complete listing of the 2014 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement recipients and project descriptions.

This fall, EPA will release a Request for Applications for the fiscal year 2015 Environmental Justice Small Grants Program.

For more information about EPA's Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem Solving Cooperative Agreement Program, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>.

#### EPA Awards Environmental Education Grants to Recipients in 18 States

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the completion of awards for the [2013 Environmental Education Model Grants](#) Program. Projects include community energy education, summer programs for low-income teenagers, integration of multimedia learning tools into watershed

education, environmental health education on the impact of climate change and asthma, and hands-on K-12 environmental education programs. From applications received in 2013, EPA has funded 20 grants from across the country, ranging from \$75,000- 200,000 for a total of approximately \$2.8 million. Winners of the 2013 competition include recipients from 18 states: Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Alabama, South Carolina, Illinois, Michigan, Louisiana, Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, Arizona, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.

Since 1992, EPA has distributed between \$2 and \$3.5 million in grant funding per year, for a total of \$62,143,290, supporting more than 3,600 grant projects. Applications for the 2014 EE Model Grants Program will be available later in Fall 2014.

The purpose of the EE Model Grants Program is to support environmental education projects that increase public awareness about environmental issues and provide participants with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques, and that will serve as models that can be replicated in a variety of settings.

For more information on the new awardees and on future EE grant competitions visit, <http://www2.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants>.

#### EPA New Request for Proposals: Funding Available for 2015 Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants

These brownfields grants may be used to address sites contaminated by petroleum and hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants (including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum). Opportunities for funding are as follows: Brownfields Assessment Grants (each funded up to \$200,000 over three years; Assessment Coalitions are funded up to \$600,000 over three years) and Brownfields Cleanup Grants (each funded up to \$200,000 over three years). Please note that applicants who received an Assessment grant from EPA in Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) are eligible to apply under this competition. If the applicant was a member of a coalition that was awarded a grant in FY14, that applicant is also eligible to apply under this assessment competition. The proposal submission deadline is December 19, 2014. Please visit [EPA's Brownfields website](#) for more information.

#### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Next PLC Session: December 17, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. EST

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

Visit our *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* Web site at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>.

**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.