

August 13, 2014

Notes from Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 11, Session 4

Topics: Current Happenings / Updates from Washington as of August 13, 2014

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Current Happenings / Updates from Washington as of August 13, 2014

HMTRI, in cooperation with EPA, has confirmed the *2014 Annual Environmental Job Training All-Grantee Meeting* to be held October 22–23, 2014. Participants must travel and check in on October 21, and are expected to stay the full two days leaving on October 24. There is no cost to attend and three nights lodging will be provided for people coming from out of town.

Active PLC members along with current and past EPA EWDJT grantees are invited to this two-day meeting. If you have not received an invitation, please send an email request to Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu.

Memphis Bioworks Foundation, Memphis, TN—Keeping your program sustainable—Ann Terry

Memphis Bioworks Foundation just secured their second EPA EWDJT grant in the FY 2014 competition after upgrading an unfunded proposal in FY 2013.

- How and why did Memphis Bioworks Foundation get into environmental workforce development?
- What did they learn during the first EPA start-up grant?
- What are their secrets to success in writing their second successful proposal?

Memphis Bioworks Foundation could be considered a model Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) program. As demonstrated by Ann, they have approached the development and operation of their program in a systematic and organized manner. They focus on strong partnerships, employer input, and student needs.

Community background and history

Memphis Bioworks Foundation was an established community nonprofit organization providing free training to community residents before expanding into environmental occupations. With a focus on health information, IT, and medical technicians, Memphis Bioworks had an established reputation among governmental workforce development agencies, trainers, and community organizations. In 2009, with assistance from the Department of Labor, they were able to expand their services to include green jobs training. By 2011, Memphis Bioworks was able to plan and obtain EPA funding for an expanded EWDJT program.

There are over 350 brownfields and 380 out-of-service underground storage tanks in the Memphis area. As part of their first grant, Memphis Bioworks Foundation served inner-city neighborhoods in north Memphis, west of the Wolf River Harbor and Mississippi River. Seventy-five percent of the residents in the target area are minorities with poverty rates from 20.9 to 35.6 percent. Former employers

abandoned the area including tire plants, chemical and fertilizer plants, crude oil refineries, stockyards, meat packing plants, and lumber mills.

With great success, the Wolf River Environmental Job Training program trained more than 100 unemployed and under-employed Memphians as environmental technicians. They were able to exceed their goals in training cycles delivered (4 to 5) and student placements exceeding their proposal goal by 126 percent.

Participants of the program were placed in the following jobs:

- Environmental workforce safety
- Solid waste regulation/recycling
- Underground storage tank (UST) leak prevention/regulation
- Green remediation
- Conservation and energy awareness
- Mold and asbestos awareness

Despite this excellent track record, Memphis Bioworks submitted but did not receive EPA funding in FY 2013. As suggested, they participated in a comprehensive EPA debriefing and review of the weaknesses in their proposed program plan. With improvements and revisions, Memphis Bioworks Foundation was successful in the FY 2014 EWDJT grant competition.

Lessons learned:

1. Don't be discouraged if a grant proposal is not funded even when the program is running well.
2. Do seek to revise and improve your program after consultation with others.
3. As a program develops, actively seek additional funding from a variety of sources. Additional support may not be directly related to the EWDJT activity, but does provide for a "critical mass" and safety net if program support is not immediately forthcoming.

What were their secrets to success in writing a second, upgraded proposal?

Labor market assessment

The labor market assessments provided by the state projected growth for hazardous materials removal workers, forklift operators, materials handlers, and insulator workers. Additionally, the employers surveyed anticipated hiring new employees, especially for workers trained in healthy home construction, hazardous waste and recycling transportation, and hazardous substances remediation. The needs assessment formed a basis for the program's training plan.

Key partners

- Memphis Workforce Investment Network
- City of Memphis
- University of Tennessee Extension
- Veteran's Affairs Medical Center
- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
- Two ex-offender special needs organizations
- Numerous community-based organizations
- Numerous environmental employers

Student recruitment

Students are recruited from unemployed residents of the target area. That target area was expanded to include the greater Memphis area for broader coverage. Ex-offender residents come from two ex-offender program partners. The Memphis Bioiworks Foundation works with nonprofits specializing in ex-offender recruitment, support, and placement services. The experience, resources and specially trained staff from these organizations provide important skills especially when working with employers familiar with the difficulties those having criminal records have in obtaining employment.

Student support

Memphis Bioworks maintains contact with students via text and cell phone. Families are involved in student/staff communications. Close attention is paid to student issues and ancillary needs.

Training resources

Training comes from a variety of providers including educational institutions, potential employers, and individual trainers including Mississippi State University and the University of Tennessee. Staff from Memphis Bioworks attends training sessions to evaluate and ensure training quality and performance.

Certifications

OSHA 40-Hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER)

USDOT Hazardous Materials Transportation (HAZMAT)

OSHA Forklift Operator (Sit Down, Stand Up, Reach Truck)

Lead Renovator, Repair and Paint (LRRP)

Asbestos Abatement Worker Initial

Mold Remediation

Training plan

Core training

- 84 hours of instruction (mandatory and awareness)
- 40-hour HAZWOPER

Awareness training

- Solid waste management and recycling
- Underground storage tank remediation
- Green remediation
- Water and wastewater treatment
- U.S. DOT HAZMAT
- Transportation
- Lead, mold, and asbestos abatement

Specialized Training

After basic training, students choose one of two advanced technical tracks based on the community needs assessment.

- Energy efficiency/retrofit (40 hours)
- Healthy homes/construction (40 hours)

Student placement

Memphis Bioworks Foundation works with environmental employers who serve on the Employer Advisory Committee. Community-based organizations, WIB placement services, and direct interaction with employers are also engaged to place graduates in environmental jobs. Memphis Bioworks participates in an employer round table every other week in addition to promoting an environmental job club for students. Employers participate as trainers and speakers, providing networking opportunities for program participants.

Internships and community service

All students participate in a community service project. When possible, students participate in internship programs.

Ann Terry would be happy to discuss their program and may be contacted at Memphis Bioworks Foundation at aterry@cmemphisbioworks.org or 901.866.1459.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

President Barack Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Congress passed the Act by a wide bipartisan majority; it is the first legislative reform in 15 years of the public workforce system.

Every year the key programs that form the pillars of WIOA help tens of millions of job seekers and workers to connect to good jobs and acquire the skills and credentials needed to obtain them. The enactment of WIOA provides opportunity for reforms to ensure the American Job Center system is job-driven—responding to the needs of employers and preparing workers for jobs that are available now and in the future.

WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. In general, the Act takes effect on July 1, 2015, the first full program year after enactment, unless otherwise noted. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) will issue further guidance on the timeframes for implementation of these changes and proposed regulations reflecting the changes in WIOA soon after enactment. For more information, visit <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>. For grant opportunities and resources, go to <http://www.doleta.gov/grants/>.

Water Wastewater Resources

Below are some links regarding stormwater management and green infrastructure from the EPA Office of Water.

Link to EPA's NPDES training/workshops page:

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/outreach.cfm?program_id=0&otype=1#stormwater

If you page down to the middle of the page, you'll see a number of links to archived webinars for anyone to use.

Some of the topics under the "general" category may be appropriate to mention for your audience.

Stormwater 101

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/courseinfo.cfm?program_id=0&outreach_id=373&schedule_id=1017

Listening session for EPA's proposed stormwater rulemaking

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/courseinfo.cfm?program_id=0&outreach_id=497&schedule_id=1083

Municipal stormwater compliance

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/courseinfo.cfm?program_id=0&outreach_id=313&schedule_id=964

Green Infrastructure training

<http://water.epa.gov/learn/>

Other training links:

General NPDES permit writers training

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/outreach/training/pwtraining.cfm>

TMDL to NPDES permit training

<http://cfpub1.epa.gov/npdes/tmdltraining.cfm>

Understanding TMDLs with stormwater sources

<http://www.epa.gov/npdes/tmdltraining/module3/player.html>

Stormwater jobs—private websites

APWA stormwater job search

<http://www.apwa.net/workzone/vacancies/1/water-and-sewers-stormwater/jobs>

WEF

<http://jobbank.wef.org/search.cfm?gclid=CJjJtjnLkCFWzNOgodpicAKg>

Careerbuilder.com

<http://www.careerbuilder.com/Jobs/Keyword/Stormwater/>

Glass Door.com

http://www.glassdoor.com/Job/storm-water-engineer-jobs-SRCH_KO0,20.htm

Networking News

First Annual Southeast Brownfields Conference

October 28-31, 2014 at the Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando, FL

Registration fees: Private Sector—\$500
 Public Sector—\$300
 Nonprofit Sector—\$200
 One-day Only—\$375

Location: Rosen Plaza Hotel
 9700 International Drive
 Orlando, FL
 Rooms are \$125 (+ tax) per night

Call 1.800.627.8258 for reservations or follow this link to reserve online:

<https://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?groupID=1257538&hotelID=2019>

If you need more information or assistance, please call Becky Buice at 850.402.2954 or email becky@nstephens.com. Hope to see many of you in Orlando in October!

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.

9th Annual Georgia Environmental Conference

The Georgia Brownfield Association
August 20-22, 2014

Location: Jekyll Island Convention Center
Jekyll Island, GA

Cost: \$350 Early Bird / \$425 Regular

The Georgia Brownfield Association is a premium sponsor of the 9th Annual Georgia Environmental Conference and is hosting the conference's Breakfast Keynote Panel, *Driving Economic Growth & Stewarding Environmental Resources*, on Thursday, August 21, 2014.

The conference is the state's largest and most comprehensive educational opportunity and will be attended by an estimated 600+ state, local, 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 and recycling experts, and many others with a strong interest in Georgia's and the Southeast region's environmental programs.

Over the three-day period, this conference will host an elite group of environmental professionals seeking to exchange knowledge and share ideas around environmental concerns in Georgia and the Southeast region. The curriculum, designed and developed by the 56-member steering committee, offers over 50 unique courses, allowing attendees to design their own personalized curriculum by selecting nine educational courses while receiving approved continuing education credits. With the combined efforts of the state's leading environmental organizations, the Georgia Environmental Conference is a valued educational experience focused on Sustaining the Future for the People of Georgia™.

To learn more, please visit the Georgia Environmental Conference Website.

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 just 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.

NOTE: The 2015 applications will be on the PETE website at <http://nationalpete.org/> on October 1. As a partner, HMTRI is able to distribute this announcement before a public announcement is made. Please contact Patti Thompson at pattijthompson@gmail.com for an early application. You may want to look at an old application on PETE's website which may be helpful to you in pulling together the information you will need for 2015.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: August 27, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. EDT

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at 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.