

October 26, 2011

Notes from Brownfields Professional Learning Community (PLC), Cycle 5, Session 1

Topics: Introduction to the Environmental Job Development Professional Learning Community
Overview - establishing sustainable environmental training and job development programs
Update: status of this year's EPA grant review cycle
Discussion: agenda topics and schedules for upcoming sessions.

How the Professional Learning Community (PLC) Works

Discussions are guided by the interests of the group. Guest mentors and experts may host sessions, or sessions may be open discussions on various topics. Each session is recorded and posted to <http://brownfields-toolbox.org>, along with post session notes for those not able to attend. Email contributions between PLC meetings are encouraged and shared with the group.

The purpose of the PLC is to promote and share innovative training and employment strategies among Brownfields communities, and provide assistance to new communities interested in developing environmental job training programs.

Objectives:

- Provide a forum for stakeholders and interested participants to have informal discussions every 2 weeks (limited to 30 minutes).
- Create an opportunity for those interested in starting new programs to discuss issues, resources, and advice from those with successful existing programs.
- Construct a mechanism for those with existing programs to assist others and discuss new issues and resources that may improve their programs.
- Create an opportunity to participate in a bi-weekly open dialog among others with common interests.
- Create a place to express concerns on government policy related to green jobs, Brownfields, job development, and training.

Who sponsors and facilitates the PLC program?

- The Brownfields Job Training PLC is sponsored by the Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI) under cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. HMTRI is based at Eastern Iowa Community Colleges, and is associated with the Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center (ATEEC) and the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE).

Prime facilitators for the PLC program are:

- Michael Senew, HMTRI. Michael has worked in and with EPA since its formation in 1970 and has worked with the EPA Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response training program since its organization in 1990.
- Glo Hanne, HMTRI. Glo has worked at Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) since 1994 in HMTRI, ATEEC, and EICC's Health, Safety, and Environmental Training program. She has worked on EPA's Brownfields Initiative since its inception in 1994.

Brownfields and Environmental Job Training

The EPA environmental job training program, administered by EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, had its origins in 1991 with a pilot program at Cuyahoga County Community College. Pilot programs matured and expanded with over 182 job training grants awarded since its inception. Today more than 4,300 unemployed individuals have received training and employment in the environmental field with an average

starting hourly wage of \$13.66. Each year EPA awards 10 - 12 startup grants to communities, academic, and nonprofit organizations focused on green jobs in Brownfields communities.

Additional background information regarding environmental job development and training programs and reference materials related to green jobs can be found at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org>.

More in depth information and reference materials regarding environmental training and education can be found at the Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center's (ATEEC) Web site at <http://www.ateec.org>.

Status of the current EPA grant review cycle

Each year about 60 grant proposal submissions are received. Ten to twelve will be approved for federal assistance of around \$300K over a two-year grant cycle. This year, a request for proposal submission will likely be issued in late November or early December. Proposals are usually due about three months later.

The first cut in the grant review process eliminates programs which do not meet qualifying criteria. Remaining proposals are evaluated based on the ranking criteria with a final determination made by EPA staff. Anticipated date of award announcements will be in the spring of 2012.

PLC Topic Schedules and Agendas

Cycle 5 PLC sessions will be held on the following dates. All 30-minute sessions will begin at 1:00pm CST (2:00pm EST).

- Session 50 – October 26, 2011
- Session 51 – November 9, 2011
- Session 52 – November 23, 2011
- Session 53 – December 7, 2011
- Session 54 – December 21, 2011
- Session 55 – January 4, 2012
- Session 56 – January 18, 2012
- Session 57 – February 15, 2012
- Session 58 – February 29, 2012

After the EPA request for proposals has been issued, the PLC will closely examine attributes required to assemble a successful team and a sustainable program plan.

Specific content for the sessions will be determined by the needs and interests of the group. General topic areas may include:

- Brownfields basics
- Green jobs / Brownfields jobs
- Equitable development
- Funding sources
- Establishing partnerships
- Community involvement
- Labor market assessments
- Program awareness and marketing
- Developing a green jobs curriculum
- Certifications
- Life skills and remedial education
- Training resources
- Student recruitment & assessment
- Training
- Job development
- Student placement

- Technical and financial resources
- Student tracking
- Program sustainability

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: November 9, 2011

2:00pm EST

Topic: Job placement strategies in this challenged economy, job banks, and working backwards in developing or reviewing your program

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.