

August 31, 2011

Notes from Brownfields Learning Community (PLC)

Topics: -- Summary of the Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting – August 22, Alexandria, VA.
 -- Future Funding – The state of environmental job development and training at EPA.
 -- Contacts for assistance in developing an environmental job development and training program

UPDATES / REMINDERS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / RESOURCES

Contact Information

An updated participant list from the Annual Job Development All-Grantee Meeting is attached. PLC members may find this list a useful resource as it represents contacts at most of the current grantee locations and includes PLC members, EPA Regional and Headquarters job training coordinators.

Feel free to call or email anyone on this list. All grantees and EPA staff are encouraged to serve as mentors to other job training programs and individuals interested in starting a new program.

Several of our grantees take great pride in their contributions to communities who were successful in obtaining federal assistance as a result of their coaching.

Job Training Resource

The Brownfields Toolbox website (www.brownfields-toolbox.org) is an exclusive environmental job development and training resource. It is updated continuously and will soon include the small group session notes and the EPA ACRES presentation from the Annual All-Grantee Meeting.

Brownfields in a Box and ***Environmental Decision Making*** are just a few of the resources available as a FREE download from the Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center (ATEEC) at <https://www.ateec.org>. You only need to log in by creating a free account to download these items.

--Glo Hanne, HMTRI

FEDERAL FUNDING

Entering a period of funding cuts and fiscal restraint, concern continues regarding the future of job development and training programs. During the last round of EPA Environmental Job Development and Training Grants, participants were fortunate to see a doubling from \$3 to \$6 million in available funds. It is not likely that amount of funding will be available for the next round of awards, however some “tailwinds” exist that may help sustain EPA’s job development and training program.

1. Broad support within EPA, states, cities and local communities for job training programs.
2. Interest from other EPA program offices such as water/waste water in supporting the program perhaps contributing additional funds and resources.
3. Continued support in congress for the EPA Brownfields program. The 2010 federal budget changes maintained at FY 2010 level of \$100 million for site assessment and cleanup and \$49.5 million for brownfields assistance to states. Other agencies were cut, some dramatically, such as the HUD BEDI, CDBG, CWSRF, and Sustainable Communities programs. Cuts in these programs, while not directly impacting environmental job training programs, may impact demand for environmental and construction workers.

Headwinds to Sustained Federal Assistance

Sustainability of the EPA environmental job development and training program is dependent of demonstration of its continued success.

1. Why should this program be in EPA vs. Department of Labor?
2. Is this program delivering positive results?

3. Is there a demonstrated need for this program?
4. Are others willing to support and contribute to this programs operation and success?

Those involved in the Environmental Job Development and Training Program understand why this program is best suited to be located in EPA. Specialized training with certifications and jobs that are tied to specific technical occupations do not fit well into the massive Department of Labor system. In fact, labor classifications are not available for many of the jobs our programs address.

Issues regarding programmatic operation rely heavily on grantees and job training programs properly reporting their achievements.

Grantees must report program achievements completely in a timely fashion. The only mechanism EPA has to answer questions regarding programmatic success is compilation and presentation of data provided by grantees. ACRES has been developed to assist in this effort. Its acceptance has demonstrated mixed results. When program information is not captured, incomplete, or under-reported, accomplishments are understated. For this reason, EPA continues to emphasize the importance of ACRES and program reporting. It also demonstrates the importance of leveraging in operating a sustainable environmental job training program.

For Your Information – 2012 Regional Green Jobs Conferences

This year Green For ALL is conducting four Regional Green Jobs Conferences instead of a single national workshop. Green For All's goal is simple; to secure \$1 billion in funding for green-collar job training in order to lift 250,000 people out of poverty across the country. Environmental job development and training is an integral part of Green for All's mission and agenda.

The regional conferences will be convened by a diverse coalition of emerging small businesses, Fortune 500 companies, green industry trade associations, labor unions, environmental organizations, and educational institutions. Each of the 2012 Good Jobs, Green Jobs Regional Conferences will reflect the character, challenges, and opportunities unique to each region and bring the conversation about how to build a green economy to local communities.

If you have an opportunity, sign up for a regional Green Jobs Conference.

2012 Regional Green Jobs Conferences

- Atlanta, Georgia - February 23 & 24
- Los Angeles, California - March 15 & 16
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - April 3 & 4
- Detroit, Michigan - May 10 & 11

Additional Resources and contributions

From Mille Hyatt, PLC member

When you're working in the heat, safety comes first. With the OSHA Heat Safety Tool, you have vital safety information available whenever and wherever you need it – right on your mobile phone.

The App allows workers and supervisors to calculate the heat index for their worksite, and based on the heat index, displays a risk level to outdoor workers. With a simple "click," you can get reminders about the protective measures that should be taken at that risk level to protect workers from heat-related illness, reminders about drinking enough fluids, scheduling rest breaks, planning for and knowing what to do in an emergency, adjusting work operations, gradually building up the workload for new workers, training on heat illness signs and symptoms, and monitoring each other for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness.

Stay informed and safe in the heat. Check your risk level. For more information about safety while working in the heat, see OSHA's heat illness webpage (http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html), including new online guidance about using the heat index to protect workers.

- Things to be doing now in preparation for a new job training initiative.
- Recent developments in job training.

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.