

November 11, 2009  
Notes from Brownfields PLC Session #15

Session leader: Mike Senew  
Topic: Community Involvement, working with employers

### **NOTES FROM SESSION 15**

Community involvement and working with employers go hand-in-hand with recruitment and placement of successful program participants.

- (1) Brownfields training participants often live in a Brownfields-impacted community or live in a close by target community. In either case, it is of utmost importance to involve local community organizations.
- (2) Local community organizations often include faith-based organizations, community development corporations, governmental and non-governmental citywide organizations, and neighborhood groups.
- (3) The importance of neighborhood groups cannot be overemphasized. Often the best recruits come from referrals, friends, and family members of recent graduates.
- (4) The time that relationships with community groups should be strengthened is BEFORE and during the planning process – not after. Make sure relationships are established so that individuals to be used as references know the Brownfields training plan well enough to recommend the program.

Employer relationships differ slightly from those with community-based organizations.

- (1) Employers may not be located in or adjacent to the Brownfields community but are active in the community.
- (2) As with community-based organizations, relationships with employers should be made early during the program planning process. Relationships with employers should include key contacts that become familiar with the proposed program.

Relationships with employers and community-based organizations extend to populating the advisory committee. Again, as with other aspects of the Brownfields Job Training program, the Advisory Committee should be organized BEFORE grants and proposals are developed.

### **COMMENTS RELATED TO PLC QUESTIONS FROM LAST SESSION**

#### **Topic — Allowable Costs**

*Refresher courses and placement services.* OSHA 8-hour HAZWOPER Refreshers and job placement costs are allowable costs under the EPA Brownfields Job Training grant. Refresher courses, when mandated, are an excellent way to track graduates after graduation. Refreshers, however, should be linked to the environmental/OSHA certification process.

It should be noted that as job placement moves into life skills training, costs become unallowable. For example, an employer interview event, contacting employers, setting up interviews, or establishing internship programs are allowable while life-skills training such as dressing, interviewing, and presentation are not allowable.

#### **Topic — Green Job Training**

Brownfields site assessment, cleanup, and restoration are green jobs. Occupation topics such as

weatherization, energy audits, solar installation, and alternative energy generation are positive contributions to a Brownfields Job Training Program, but they are not the prime focus of the EPA-sponsored program which addresses assessment, remediation, and restoration. Other green job subject areas such as those mentioned can be treated similarly to a dual track program such as Brownfields remediation and construction trades training. If EPA funds are used in these other green job occupations, a link should be established between those occupations and the Brownfields remediation process.

**The PLC is taking a break for Brownfields 2009 and Thanksgiving. The next PLC session will be held on Wednesday, December 2, at 1:00pm CST. The topic will be *Health and Safety Training and Practices*.**