

March 15, 2017



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 16, Session 6

- Topics:
1. News from Washington and HMTRI
 2. Schedule of events
 3. Highlights from this week's PLC
 4. City of Pittsburg, CA—Leveraging private and public partnerships
 5. EWDJT resources and assistance
 6. Items of interest

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

The Brownfields National Conference has extended their Call for Ideas to March 24, 2017. All ideas and formats are welcome. Further information and details can be found on the [Brownfields Conference](#) website.

A reminder to FY17 EWDJT applicants—It is important to keep your partners and stakeholders informed regarding the progress of the grant review. Also note that primary partners may be contacted by reviewers to confirm their involvement in the program.

HMTRI is in the process of updating the [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website and [Best Practices for Job Training Programs in Brownfields Redevelopment Initiatives](#) report. If you have photos you would like to share on the website or in the updated report, please contact Glo at ghanne@eicc.edu for additional information.

EPA budget cuts are all over the news, but at this point it's too early to know how this will turn out. The disturbing news is that in the current 28-page 2018 administration budget proposal, there are deep cuts to environmental justice including funding cuts of 42 percent for the brownfields site cleanup program to \$14.7 million. There is also encouraging news:

- Budgets are the responsibility of Congress and must be approved by both the House and Senate. Administration proposals may, and often do, change dramatically.
- Many members disagree with proposed cuts to EPA and are strong advocates of the Brownfields program.
- Brownfields additionally gets high marks and strong support from mayors, business, and environmental organizations.
- Scott Pruitt, EPA Administrator, has said, "In this budget discussion that is ongoing with Congress that is just starting, there are some concerns about some of these grant programs that EPA has been a part of historically. I want you to know that with the White House and also with

Congress, I am communicating a message that the Brownfields program, Superfund program, and the water infrastructure grants and state revolving funds are essential to protect."

Our best advice is to maintain the good work of EWDJT and community involvement, and keep current with program reporting.

2. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

By this time, EWDJT applicants who did not meet qualification criteria should have been notified. The next step is a critical review of ranking criteria. A tentative timeline for the grant review process is below.

- May/June—Awards announced.
- July/August—Administrative and work plan approvals. Funds may be spent up to 90 days before completion of final paperwork after official acceptance is made.
- August/September—Official notice that funds are available for spending.
- August 9–10, 2017—Annual All-Grantee Meeting in Alexandria, VA.
- September and ongoing—Training and execution of work plans including quarterly and ACRES reports.
- November 2017—FY2018 EWDJT Request for Proposals issued (tentative).

3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS WEEK'S PLC

This week's presentation by Gerry Dunbar and Merl Craft demonstrated the benefits of partnering by expanding the capabilities of an established training organization. Additional leveraging comes from their association with the Pittsburg Power Company, a California municipal Joint Powers Authority (JPA) between the city of Pittsburg and the city's Redevelopment Agency. Adding close relationships with the city government, county workforce efforts, and organized labor make this program outstanding and sustainable.

4. CITY OF PITTSBURG, CA—LEVERAGING PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

Thank you, Meri Craft and Gerry Dunbar, for your EWDJT program update.

Success in a competitive environment

The first question that came to mind is how (in FY2016) did the [city of Pittsburg, CA](#) compete with some of the best EWDJT grantees, all located in northern California? Joining the city Richmond, Hunters Point Family, and Cypress Mandela Training Center, the city of Pittsburg created a unique program centered on strong public and private partnerships. Additional credit goes to the city government which had the foresight to partner and support a strong network of private, nonprofit, and municipal organizations.

How did they do it?

As the fiscal agent for the EWDJT cooperative agreement, the city issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for subgrantees to participate and become the organization responsible for the implementation of the grant. In Pittsburg's case, Future Build recognized an opportunity to expand and integrate environmental technology into their solar, energy, and construction trade programs. With an established reputation, network of partners, and trainers, Future Build was able to offer a highly leveraged and comprehensive EWDJT program. Adding environmental technology allowed Future Build to expand training opportunities and, in turn, leverage extensive support services, pre apprenticeship opportunities, and an 85 percent employment rate with job coaching and referrals. Additional leveraging included coordination with local support partners, and a unique relationship with the Pittsburg Power Company.

Pittsburg Power Company

The Pittsburg Power Company is a California municipal Joint Powers Authority (JPA) established in 1997 between the city of Pittsburg and the city's Redevelopment Agency. As a California JPA, Pittsburg Power Company operates as an electric and natural gas municipal utility, with the authority to provide wholesale and retail electric and gas utility services under authorized franchise agreements within California. As part of their agreement, Pittsburg Power Company is committed to helping build opportunities and programs that promote and enhance the greater good of the people within those communities.

In 2008, the Pittsburg Power Company created the Community Outreach Grant Program to invest in the communities they serve. Through the Community Outreach Program, Pittsburg Power Company supports local scholarships and job training programs. Part of that mission has included providing facilities, and backstop and other support to the Future Build program.

Partnerships for support and sustainability

With multiple partnerships and subawards, it becomes clear how the city of Pittsburg with Future Build can develop a highly leveraged, sustainable EWDJT program. Below are a few of the partners in this coordinated effort.

- City of Pittsburg—Fiscal agent/awardee
- Future Build—Principle subgrantee, trainer, project manager
- Contra Costa County
- Contra Costa County Workforce Development Board—Support services
- Contra Costa County Career Centers—Recruitment and placement
- Contra Costa Building Trades Council—Training and labor coordination

- Pittsburg Power Company—Facilities and backstop support
- East Bay Leadership Council
- Northern California Laborers Training Center
- Multiple local private sector partners
- Grid alternatives
- Los Medanos College

Program overview

Future Build, a first time grantee for EWDJT, is expanding their existing 16-week pre-apprenticeship construction program to incorporate environmental training in hazardous waste cleanup and management, as well as solar panel installation.

Target community

The Future Build Environmental Training Program is working in partnership with members of the Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative, consisting of Contra Costa County, six waterfront communities, and private sector industrial associations, to provide training to low-income individuals and veterans. The goal of the initiative is to revitalize the industrial waterfront using trained EWDJT graduates.

Training

The core training program is 16 weeks with 206 hours of instruction. Participants who complete the training earn nine state or federal certifications. Students have a regular work schedule as part of their training schedule. Lunch is provided via leveraged funds.

Key instruction includes:

- 40-hour HAZWOPER
- OSHA 10-hour Construction Industry training
- Confined space entry
- Emergency response
- Traffic control (flagger)
- Solar technology
- Refinery safety orientation
- CPR/first aid
- AFL/CIO Multi Craft core curriculum
- BTI—Construction technology / Green building standard

- Future Build participants are also able to participate in additional classes/trainings offered at the Terrance J. O'Sullivan Laborers Training Center in San Ramon with space permitting and upon approval of case manager.

Post-graduation and job placement

Following the 16 weeks of core instruction, post-graduate services are provided for 120 days that include:

- Continued career counseling
- Job coaching
- Job referrals
- Union referrals
- Job fairs
- Workshops
- Additional assistance from workforce investment job placement specialists
- Referrals for post-secondary opportunities
- \$17/hour is the average placement wage

Training goals

- Place at least 51 out of 68 students
- Currently maintains an 87% placement rate

Community service

Pre-apprenticeship training (classroom and laboratory) are married to practical applications in the field. The practical applications can also be referred to as community benefit projects. In community benefit projects, the trainees exercise what they have learned in the classroom and lab by improving facilities in public housing projects, rehabilitation of homes for low income residents, schools, and public recreational facilities such as parks.

Most recently, Future Build made facility improvements to a facility in Pittsburg that caters to young children, [Small World Park](#). The improvements included a large deck and walkway that spans the park's pond; refurbishing doors, trim, and hardware; and painting several of the park's structures. Drainage work was also included.

Prior to the Small World Park community benefit project, Future Build made improvements to the community room in the publicly owned senior housing complex in Bay Point, Casa Serena. They also built a 16x20 storage unit and an off-grid solar trailer which produces one kilowatt of electricity commissioned by the Pittsburg Power Company for use in teaching the benefits of solar energy at local schools.

Student recruitment

The city of Pittsburg is targeting unemployed and underemployed residents of Pittsburg, CA and its surrounding Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative Area. Simple signage in the target communities (laundromats, road signs, and community organizations) proves to be the most cost effective. See the [Future Build](#) website for additional information about their program recruitment materials and application forms.

Applicant screening—Drug testing

Students must be drug-free with testing conducted after acceptance into the program and before instruction begins. Those testing positive during training will not receive certificates of referral for employment. Union entry requires drug testing. Applicants and students are well informed of drug policies.

Future Build works closely with probation services. Twenty percent of ex-offenders are on probation.

Student support

Participants are reviewed for additional potential training and equipment benefits including childcare, transportation, and life skills training from a variety of Future Build partners.

Additional observations in working with public/private partnerships

Gerry provides the following advice to new grantees with multiple leveraging partners:

- Paperwork and program reporting can be extensive.
- With multiple partners and subawards, administrative efforts can be underestimated.

Gerry and Merl would be happy to discuss the Future Build program in more detail.

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5. EWDJT RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

Brownfields Toolbox website

EPA documents including RFP guidelines, PLC post-session notes and audio recordings, and much more about environmental job training programs are available on HMTRI's [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website. Visitors to the website may want to also look at the "Start a Program" section. Click on the "Start a Program" tab along the top. Many components are regularly updated, so check back often.

PLC distribution list

If you are not on the PLC distribution list, you may want to join. Participants on the list receive post-session notes for each session before they are posted to the [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website.

TechDirect

The purpose of TechDirect is to identify new technical, policy, and guidance resources related to the assessment and remediation of contaminated soil, sediments, and groundwater. Anyone interested in subscribing may do so on the [CLU-IN](#) website. All previous issues of TechDirect are also archived there, and can be searched by keyword or viewed as individual issues.

6. ITEMS OF INTEREST

2017 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting

Mark your calendar and register for the 2017 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting. The meeting will be held August 9–10 at the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria located at 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Travel days are August 8 and 11.

This meeting will be attended by:

- EPA regional and headquarters staff
- Present EPA-funded EWDJT grantees
- Past EWDJT grantees
- PLC members

The deadline to register and to make hotel reservations in the reserved block of rooms is **Monday, July 17, 2017**. **PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!** Contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu for more information and registration information.

National Brownfields Training Conference

Mark your calendar for the National Brownfields Training Conference to be held in Pittsburgh, PA on December 5–7, 2017 with pre-conference workshops on December 4. The conference is co-sponsored

by the US EPA and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) The conference, offered every two years, is the largest gathering of stakeholders focused on cleaning up and reusing formerly utilized commercial and industrial properties. <http://brownfields2017.org/>

National Brownfields Training Conference—Call for Ideas

This is a reminder that the Call for Ideas for the National Brownfields Conference is open NOW through March 17. Proposals are being accepted for educational sessions, pre-conference training, and poster presentations. The planning team is looking for a wide range of topics including reuse success stories; greener solutions; local community engagement; and liability, enforcement, and technical considerations. Please consider submitting your own proposal, as well as encouraging potentially interested stakeholders to do so. This is a great opportunity to showcase the work you do to strengthen communities. Information and details can be found at <http://brownfields2017.org/>. Feel free to contact Enid Chiu with any questions or concerns at chiu.enid@epa.gov or 215.814.3219.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: March 29, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. ET
Please call in five minutes early.

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com.



Visit our *HMTRI 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* website at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu.

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.