

May 17, 2017



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 16, Session 10

This was the last PLC session in this cycle. Cycle 17 will begin on June 28, 2017, and will include ten PLC sessions that focus on developing effective EWDJT strategies and tips for preparing for the next EPA EWDJT Request for Proposals (RFP). Calls will be a mix of open discussion, workforce development news, resources, and presentations from current EWDJT grantees.

- Topics:
1. News from Washington and HMTRI
 2. Proposals not selected for funding
 3. We were funded—What next?
 4. Placement assistance—Certified Employee Finder coming soon
 5. Items of interest
 6. News Release—Selection of 14 organizations to receive EWDJT funding

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON AND HMTRI

EWDJT funding awards update

Congratulations to the following 14 organizations selected for EPA EWDJT funding. See full text of the EPA news release below in section 6 of these post-session notes.

- The Fortune Society, Inc., New York City, New York
- Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc., Portland, Oregon
- Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Florida State College at Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Florida
- People United for Sustainable Housing, Inc., Buffalo, New York
- PathStone Corporation, Arecibo, Barceloneta and Manati, Puerto Rico
- Zender Environmental Health and Research Group, Anchorage, Alaska
- Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps., Racine, Wisconsin
- OAI, Inc., Chicago, Illinois
- Salish Kootenai College, Inc., Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana
- Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board, Lawrence, Massachusetts
- St. Louis Community College, St. Louis County, Missouri
- City of Richmond, Richmond, California
- Earth Conservancy, Ashley, Pennsylvania

Important things to do now

If your proposal was not accepted for funding, contact your EPA regional job training coordinator and ask for a review of your application. Your request should be made within 14 days of notification that the proposal was not recommended for funding.

If you are still interested in establishing an EWDJT program after finding out why your proposal was not selected, register for the **Annual Job Development All-Grantee Meeting**. This meeting is hosted by HMTRI under cooperative agreement with EPA. There is no registration fee to attend and lodging costs for three nights are covered. Participants are responsible for transportation to Alexandria, VA, and some meals.

DATE: August 9–10, 2017
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Travel days: August 8 and 11

LOCATION: Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria
901 N. Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

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

Contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu for more information. The deadline for making hotel reservations is July 17, 2017.

2. PROPOSALS NOT SELECTED FOR FUNDING

A word to existing programs not funded this year

Each year, awards are made on the quality and comprehensiveness of the program as described in the proposal. It is unfortunate that reviewers are not able to visit applicant programs and that funding decisions need to be based on objective reviews of program applications. With limited funds, it is also unfortunate that it is not possible for EPA to fund every successful program.

We often refer to EWDJT programs that reapply for continued funding as “re-ups.” Since the number of awards each year is limited by available funds, re-ups must compete with new, first-time applicants as well as each other. This year’s budget only allowed 14 awards, and 19 existing EWDJT programs were eligible to reapply. Additionally, many first-time applications and previously unfunded applications joined in the competition. In short, competition was steep leaving many good programs unfunded in

FY17. This does not mean they were bad or underperforming programs. It indicates that their proposal submissions were not evaluated as high as the 14 applications that were funded.

The good news was that ten grantees of 19 eligible to reapply were recommended for funding. Three first-time proposals and a program that has not been funded for several years also received approval.

For those established programs not funded this year, we offer these suggestions.

- Work to keep your program active. A new RFP is only months away.
- A program may be successful and worthy of assistance. Unfortunately, awards are based on proposals as they are submitted.
- Often unfunded proposals are the result of not adequately responding to ranking criteria questions.
- With increased competition, existing programs must demonstrate a significant expansion of their former proposal.
- Experienced programs have a good base on which to expand their FY18 program plans and proposals.
- Many programs have missed a year—sometimes more than one year—only to come back strong with a new program and comprehensive proposal.

First time applicants that were not funded this year

We do not know the total number of proposals received for funding. Hopefully we will soon have that information and pass it on to those who are interested. In the past, generally 25–35 percent of proposals have been funded. While this appears to be a pretty good success rate, many of the organizations have been developing their programs for years and have extensive prior experience.

After reading the RFP, most organizations realize that several months of preparation are required to submit a competitive application. New programs need at least six months to establish networks, partnerships, and leveraged resources that are integral to the success of environmental workforce programs. For this reason, many applications are not funded the first year but return with great proposals after spending the time and effort necessary to develop a successful environmental workforce program. The observations below have been made by experienced grantees who were not funded on their first submission.

- Don't give up. The next RFP is only months away.
- Take advantage of available technical assistance and mentoring opportunities that are free of charge.
- Important—Contact the EPA regional coordinator as soon as possible.
- Re-examine your partnerships, community outreach, and target community.

- Do not attempt to resubmit the same proposal during the next competition—it must be expanded.

Advice for all applicants who were not selected for funding

- Inform your partners, supporters, and stakeholders that you intend to resubmit an expanded proposal in the FY18 EWDJT competition.
- It is important that you request a formal review of your proposal within 14 days of the notification letter. EPA regional coordinators will review your proposal, reader comments, and provide guidance on how your proposal can be improved.
- Take advantage of technical assistance and mentoring opportunities available to organizations interested in establishing an EWDJT program. Many resources are available to interested organizations including HMTRI's **Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting**, listserv, Brownfields Toolbox website, PLC, and individualized technical assistance.
- Begin NOW. It takes months to establish a network of community organizations, partners, employers, and leveraged resources to properly develop or expand an EWDJT program.

3. WE WERE FUNDED—WHAT NEXT?

Congratulations to the 14 newly funded EWDJT programs. The competitive nature of this program demonstrated your ability to present one of the 14 best program plans among those submitted. However, you have only been recommended for funding and the money is not yet available to spend. Before the formal award is made and drawdowns can be made, several important milestones must be completed.

- Terms and Conditions with approved work plans should be the primary focus during the next four months.
- After the award letter has been received, the principal grant recipient must acknowledge their acceptance of the Terms and Conditions. In the case of governmental organizations, acceptance may have to be approved by city council or community colleges. Nonprofit organizations and tribes may need approval from the board of directors, Tribal council, or director. Don't assume these approvals will be automatic.
- Regional coordinators will contact the principal grant recipient and send a package or template with all the information the EPA grants office needs to process the grant.
- After contacting the regional coordinator, it would be wise to set up a meeting with partners and stakeholders who have an active role in the program.
- The May issue of [CONNECT News](#) describes in detail what to expect after a grant has been recommended for funding.

4. PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE—CERTIFIED EMPLOYEE FINDER COMING SOON

The Certified Employee Finder is almost ready to post to the Brownfields Toolbox website. This publication is meant to assist in placing graduates, but also provides useful information about other EWDJT programs. HMTRI has scanned 44 active EWDJT programs for the following information:

- 2017 graduation dates
- Approximate number graduates who will ready for employment
- Certificates and certifications held by graduates
- Other core competencies
- Name, phone number, and email address to contact for more program information

The final document will be distributed on our listserv and posted to our Brownfields Toolbox website. The Certified Employee Finder will:

- Assist employers who are searching for screened, qualified, and certified remediation workers.
- Serve as a referral resource to EWDJT programs when working with prospective employers.
- Provide a quick overview and comparison of EWDJT programs across the country.

Contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu for more information or updates to the Certified Employee Finder.

5. ITEMS OF INTEREST

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 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.

Last call for the 2017 Great Environmental Safety Training (GreatEST) Institute

Openings for the 2017 GreatEST Institute train-the-trainer are just about closed. Applicants are required to complete online training before classes begin. If you are able to complete the online training before the Institute starts, you may be able to participate in this valuable instruction.

The Institute will run in Davenport, Iowa, from June 4–16, 2017. Participants are prepared through a ten-day training to deliver required certifications for public and private responders and workers including:

- 40-hour Wastesite Worker Health and Safety
- 24-hour Industrial Emergency Response
- DOT HazMat
- Hazard Awareness and Communication

Participants train workers and responders in their local areas and report the number of courses they provide to HMTRI's partner, the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE). PETE reports these numbers to NIEHS who funds the training. Members may charge for the courses offered in their local area.

Cost of travel by air or through mileage reimbursement and lodging will be paid by PETE. During the Institute, everyone will be staying at the Radisson Quad City Plaza in Davenport, IA. Local travel between the hotel and the training site will be provided. The hotel provides transportation to and from airport.

Some meals will be provided during the Institute. A registration fee of \$75 is charged to participants (reimbursed on travel forms) to cover the cost of snacks, beverages, three lunches, and the closing banquet. All other meals, including those during travel, will be reimbursed on a per diem basis.

The Institute is limited and online training is a prerequisite for acceptance. For more information and questions, contact Patti Thompson at pattijthompson@gmail.com.

Brownfields Toolbox

Post-session notes and audio recordings from Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions and much more about environmental workforce development programs are available on HMTRI's [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website. EPA documents including RFP guidelines are also housed on the website.

Visitors to the website may want to 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.

EWDJT Social Media Directory

HMTRI has compiled a social media directory for over 35 EWDJT programs. Websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Google + social platforms are linked for easy navigating. The Social Media Directory is on HMTRI's [Brownfields Toolbox](#) website in the Download section.

6. NEWS RELEASE—SELECTION OF 14 ORGANIZATIONS TO RECEIVE EWDJT FUNDING

EPA's Brownfields Job Training Program Transforms Lives and Land Across the Country

05/16/2017

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WASHINGTON – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the selection of 14 organizations to receive funding to operate environmental job training programs for local residents. Funded through the agency's Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) Program, the organizations will receive a total of approximately \$2.7 million to help residents learn the skills needed to secure employment in the environmental field. These grants help prepare people for green jobs that reduce environmental contamination and provide more sustainable futures for the communities most affected by solid and hazardous waste contamination.

"Brownfields job training programs are a win-win for communities impacted by hazardous waste sites," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. "These job training programs can touch and change lives by teaching valuable and marketable skills that also help protect our environment."

"Massachusetts has a proud history of environmental protection, and this workforce development and job training grant will help meet the demands of employers and job candidates," said Governor Charlie Baker. "We appreciate the EPA's support for the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board and will continue pursuing steps at the state level to bolster educational training opportunities that are consistent with Massachusetts' commitment to a diverse, skilled workforce."

"I'm glad to see the EPA recognize the great work that St. Louis Community College (STLCC) is doing to recruit and train students for good-paying jobs," said U.S. Senator Roy Blunt. "STLCC has a strong record of placing program graduates in high-demand fields, and these additional resources will give more students the skills they need to secure their future and improve their communities."

"Job training programs are important to growing good-paying Montana jobs that maintain our pristine environment," stated U.S. Senator Steve Daines.

"This grant will allow residents of the 11th District [of Pennsylvania], including our veterans, to obtain the skills necessary to fill good-paying jobs," U.S. Representative Lou Barletta said. "What better way to prepare our workers than to train them to reclaim abandoned mine lands, improve our environment, and strengthen our local economy."

U.S. Representative John Rutherford said, "Through the Brownfield program, dozens of Northeast Florida residents will have the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to reinvent these sites while

gaining real-world work experience. These program transformations will positively impact the Jacksonville community, and will increase investments in our city.”

Today’s selectees are:

The Fortune Society, Inc., New York City, New York
Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc., Portland, Oregon
Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Florida State College at Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Florida
People United for Sustainable Housing, Inc., Buffalo, New York
PathStone Corporation, Arecibo, Barceloneta and Manati, Puerto Rico
Zender Environmental Health and Research Group, Anchorage, Alaska
Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps., Racine, Wisconsin
OAI, Inc., Chicago, Illinois
Salish Kootenai College, Inc., Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana
Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board, Lawrence, Massachusetts
St. Louis Community College, St. Louis County, Missouri
City of Richmond, Richmond, California
Earth Conservancy, Ashley, Pennsylvania

For over two decades, EPA’s EWDJT program has helped put people to work by building a skilled workforce across the country. The program awards competitive grants to nonprofit organizations and other eligible entities to recruit, train, and place unemployed and underemployed individuals. Individuals completing the training have often overcome a variety of barriers to employment. Many are from low-income neighborhoods. The training programs also serve dislocated workers who have lost their jobs as a result of manufacturing plant closures, minorities, tribal members, transitioning veterans, ex-offenders, and other individuals who may have faced barriers to employment.

Since 1998, when the EWDJT grant program started, more than 274 grants have been awarded. Approximately 16,300 individuals have completed training, and of those, more than 11,900 individuals have been placed in full-time employment earning an average starting wage of over \$14 an hour. This equates to a cumulative job placement rate of 73 percent of graduates.

There are an estimated 450,000 abandoned and contaminated waste sites in America. When brownfields are addressed, nearby property values within a one-mile radius can increase 5-15.2 percent according to an independent study.

For more information on EWDJT grantees, including past EWDJT grantees, please visit: https://cfpub.epa.gov/bf_factsheets/

For more information on EPA’s EWDJT program, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/environmental-workforce-development-and-job-training-grants>

For a success story from Tacoma, Washington, visit: <https://blog.epa.gov/blog/2017/05/environmental-workforce-development-and-job-training-success-stories-tacoma-washington>

For a success story from Richmond, California, visit: <https://blog.epa.gov/blog/2017/05/environmental-workforce-development-and-job-training-success-stories-richmond-california>

For EPA's blog post on the Brownfields Job Training program, visit: <https://blog.epa.gov/blog/2017/05/brownfields-job-training-is-a-win-win-for-job-creation-and-environmental-protection>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: June 28, 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](http://HMTRI.BrownfieldsToolbox) website for more information on Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training programs. All [PLC session notes and recordings](#) are also located on the website. 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 job training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA or its policy and should not be taken as official guidance.