

NGA Center for
BEST PRACTICES

Collaborative
ECONOMICS

Corporation for a
SKILLED WORKFORCE

promising practices profiles

july 2011

These promising practices are provided as a resource to the
U.S. Department of Labor Recovery Act grantees

introduction

This is the first installment of an ongoing series of promising practices profiles prepared by the ARRA Technical Assistance Partnership (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, and Collaborative Economics Inc.), documenting key strategies that ARRA High Growth and Emerging Industries (HGEI) grantees are pursuing to recruit, prepare, support, and place Americans into jobs in a wide range of occupations in the emerging green economy, the rapidly transforming health services sector, and other high-potential industries such as transportation and logistics. These profiles have specific strategies that are immediately relevant to other ARRA HGEI grantees (as well as others in the workforce development field) as they address the many challenges of training and placing people in a difficult economic environment.

The profiles are the product of a process that identified and winnowed a list of grantee candidates from four Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA) types—Energy Training Partnerships, Healthcare and Other High Growth Emerging Industries, Pathways out of Poverty, and State Energy Sector Partnerships, as well as one non-ARRA grantee. Candidates were selected based on their performance to date, recommendations from the Technical Assistance Partnership and Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and interviews with grantee leaders, through an expert and peer review. All the grantees profiled are still implementing and refining their approach; thus, the profiles represent a current snapshot of selected grantees—those who are experiencing some success with strategies that might also be beneficial to other grantees who are on a similar journey.

The profiles are purposely described as “promising” practices to reflect that they are strategies that may have experienced some success, but have not yet been the subject of a formal evaluation. They are also the first set of promising practices identified based on the best information available at the time, and should not be considered a complete accounting of promising practices across more than 150 grantees. As you review these profiles, please note that ETA has not evaluated or endorsed the specific strategies and activities in this document, and that the applicability of these strategies and activities will vary based on the focus of your individual grant, your timeline and period of performance, and other factors. You should work with your FPO, as

necessary, to ensure that specific activities that you are considering pursuing are allowable and appropriate under your SGAs and within the scope of your grant’s Statement of Work. The profiles have already proven to be helpful to other grantees, helping to stimulate thinking about effective and sometimes innovative strategies for meeting grant outcomes.

The profiles typically have multiple promising practices—spanning several “success factors” that have been identified by the ARRA T.A. Partnership. Grantees are encouraged to use the Success Factor self-assessment framework to review their own strategies, and then examine the profiles for promising practices that could be useful in strengthening or supplementing those strategies. To access this document, please go to your SGA’s Community of Practice webpage. The profiles will continue to be used in the months ahead in the wide range of technical assistance offerings available to ARRA HGEI grantees—from webinars and learning networks to regional meetings and national institutes.

The profiles are indexed according to SGA type, as well as key success factors. Each of the 15 profiles is approximately five pages in length, and structured to provide an overview rather than a detailed description of key strategies, with explicit reference to specific success factors. Grantees are encouraged to follow up directly with their peers, or participate in learning networks or other technical assistance offerings to explore these strategies in more depth.

The process to develop a second round of abstracts and profiles is already underway and will focus on understanding what key strategies are working for grantees with the highest job placement and retention. Initial abstracts on key grantees and their strategies will be available at the ARRA All-Grantee Institute, titled “Job Placement is Job One” (<http://www.cvent.com/d/ccqnd2>).

As we continue to collect and document promising practices, we are interested in hearing your input on which strategies you find useful and whether you plan to adopt any of the practices described in these profiles. We invite you to send us your feedback at green.jobs@dol.gov.

contents

INDEX	7
By Critical Success Factor.....	7
By Industry.....	9
By Target Population.....	9
HEALTHCARE & OTHER HIGH GROWTH EMERGING INDUSTRIES	11
Cincinnati State Technical & Community College.....	13
Columbus State Community College.....	21
PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY	27
Jobs For The Future.....	29
MDC, Inc.....	33
Northern Rural Training & Employment Consortium.....	36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.....	41
Southwest Housing Solutions.....	44
The Workplace, Inc.....	52
West Hills Community College District.....	56
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County.....	61
STATE ENERGY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP & TRAINING	67
Colorado Department Of Labor and Employment.....	69
Commonwealth Of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.....	74
North Carolina Department Of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development.....	78
ENERGY TRAINING PARTNERSHIP	83
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee.....	85
OTHER	89
Humboldt County Workforce Investment Board.....	91

index

by critical success factor

CONTINUUM OF PARTICIPANT SUPPORT		Page
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee		85
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College		13
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment		69
Columbus State Community College		21
Humboldt County WIB		91
Jobs for the Future		29
MDC, Inc.		33
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium		36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.		41
Southwest Housing Solutions		44
The Workplace, Inc.		52
West Hills Community College District		56
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County		62
DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING		
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College		13
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment		69
Humboldt County WIB		91
Jobs for the Future		29
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development		78
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium		36
The Workplace, Inc.		52
West Hills Community College District		56
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County		62
EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT		
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee		85
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College		13
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment		69
Columbus State Community College		21
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development		74
Humboldt County WIB		91
Jobs for the Future		29
MDC, Inc.		33
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development		78
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium		36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.		41
Southwest Housing Solutions		44
The Workplace, Inc.		52
West Hills Community College District		56
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County		62

LEVERAGING RESOURCES		Page
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee		85
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College		13
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment		69
Columbus State Community College		21
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development		74
Jobs for the Future		29
MDC, Inc.		33
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development		78
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium		36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.		41
Southwest Housing Solutions		44
The Workplace, Inc.		52
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County		62
PARTNERSHIP BUILDING		
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee		85
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College		13
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment		69
Columbus State Community College		21
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development		74
Humboldt County WIB		91
Jobs for the Future		29
MDC, Inc.		33
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development		78
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium		36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.		41
Southwest Housing Solutions		44
The Workplace, Inc.		52
West Hills Community College District		56
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County		62
POLICY ALIGNMENT		
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee		85
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment		69
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development		74
Humboldt County WIB		91
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development		78
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.		41
The Workplace, Inc.		52
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County.		62
SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS CHANGE		Page
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College		13
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development		74
Humboldt County WIB		91
MDC, Inc.		33
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium		36
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County.		62

OTHER: ALIGNMENT WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Columbus State Community College	21
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment	69
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	74
Humboldt County WIB	91
Jobs for the Future	29
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium	36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.	41
OTHER: GRANTS MANAGEMENT	
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	74

by industry

ENERGY EFFICIENCY	
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment	69
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	74
Jobs for the Future	29
MDC, Inc.	33
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development	78
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium	36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.	41
Southwest Housing Solutions	44
The Workplace, Inc.	52
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County	62
SOLAR	
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee	85
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	74
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium	36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.	41
West Hills Community College District	56
OTHER	
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College	13
Columbus State Community College	21
North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development	78
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium	36
West Hills Community College District	56

by target population

EX-OFFENDERS	
MDC, Inc.	33
Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium	36
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Inc.	41
West Hills Community College District	56
LIMITED-ENGLISH SPEAKERS	
West Hills Community College District	56
VETERANS	
Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee	89
Southwest Housing Solutions	52

healthcare & other high growth emerging industries

cincinnati state technical &
community college

columbus state
community college

cincinnati state technical & community college

Cincinnati, Ohio

SGA Type - Healthcare and Other High Growth Emerging Industries

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati is a collaboration between Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's Health and Public Safety Division, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC), UC Health TriHealth, Inc., Mercy Health Partners, Dress for Success Cincinnati, Great Oaks Career Campuses, and Mercy Neighborhood Ministries. This collaboration has resulted in the development of a comprehensive health career pathway for incumbent entry-level employees, unemployed individuals referred to the pathway, and new students who have self-selected the program. The career pathway is a system of connected educational/training programs and support services that prepare and enable employees and community residents to overcome barriers in the difficult transition to successively higher levels of education and employment. The goal of the Collaborative is to give health care career opportunities to entry level, incumbent hospital employees and economically disadvantaged individuals in order to address the regional demand for health care workers while concurrently diversifying the health care workforce.

The Collaborative uses a "career pathways" framework for structuring efforts around training and workforce development. A diagram of the framework is at the end of this profile and is described by the Collaborative as follows:

"They are coherent, articulated sequences of rigorous academic and career courses, commencing with the twelfth grade and leading to an associate's degree, an industry-recognized certificate or licensure, and/or a baccalaureate degree and beyond. They also are connected education building blocks, with integrated work experiences and support services, which enable students and adults to combine work and learning and advance over time to better jobs and higher levels of education. As a statewide and national initiative, Career Pathways goals are to increase access, awareness, affordability, resources, and alignment for high school students, adult learners, and the incumbent work force to pursue educational and training opportunities around a career focus."

For this grant, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (CSTCC) will further develop its existing program, the Collaborative, which has already successfully developed employer-driven career pathways for jobs in the health care industry. This capacity building project will increase programming for nursing and allied health and expand courses for long-term care and health information technology, based on identified industry growth employment opportunities.



Lawra Baumann
lawra.baumann@cincinnatiastate.edu

PROMISING PRACTICES

AN “EMPLOYER CENTRIC APPROACH”

Employer Engagement

The Health Careers Collaborative takes what they call an “employer centric approach”—a comprehensive, systematic, and long-term engagement of local health care employers in the region. At the front end, the Collaborative has worked for over a decade with high-level health executives, who reach out themselves and peer-to-peer to recruit additional executives. Employers have greater credibility in attracting peer partners and are able to have focused conversations on the benefits of the collaborative and how their involvement can help initiate vital changes and influence policy. Employer partners chair monthly meetings, recruit incumbent workers, and are fully committed to supporting the efforts of the Collaborative. The group of industry executives forms an employer-driven steering committee that meets and explicitly identifies key skill sets that are in high demand, as well as critical career pathways. Having an employer-driven steering committee means the process is driven by actual labor market demand information coming straight from the executives that are experiencing, first hand, needs for certain types of skilled workers. Additionally, convening employers along with educational and workforce institutions allows the group to identify and work towards improving holistic and systemic deficiencies, gathering insights from all parties relevant to meeting the workforce needs of the health care system.

Employers (and other partners) sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that explicitly outlines the mutual partner expectations and commitments. The MOU was implemented to create a formal structure for the partnerships. It defines the purpose of the Collaborative, and establishes mutual expectations around comprehensive data collection and tracking, the focus on target populations (both incumbent workers and unemployed and underemployed persons), and the specific continuum of services that the Collaborative will provide. Individual team members serve as representatives for their organization. Prior to implementing the MOU, there was more turnover in participating partners as the representatives for organizations changed over. The MOU provided the formal structure to attain committed partnerships

with organizations that are focused on the goals and objectives of the Collaborative. Organizations maintain commitment to the Collaborative because of the positive results from investing in program participants including improvements in retention and performance. Refer to the MOU document at the end of the profile. Employer engagement will be further expanded with a regional industry conference planned for late 2011.

PROVING THE RETURN-ON-INVESTMENT

Data-Driven Decision Making

The Collaborative has created a participant data collection system that is used by all the partners who provide training and services. A balanced scorecard is updated regularly and reported to all partners on a monthly basis. The scorecard reports grant objectives (as reported in RAD), deliverables, expenditures and leveraged funds by quarter. There is also a column showing the percent of goal achieved (objectives and leveraged funds) and percent expended (expenditures). An example scorecard is shown at the end of the profile. The Collaborative analyzes trend data to identify obstacles to participant success. The Collaborative is also piloting the use of a National Career Readiness Credential and Profile Assessment to refer participants into appropriate career pathways.

An employer return-on-investment (ROI) model has been developed to help expand and sustain employer engagement over the long term. The analysis for the ROI was performed by The New Growth Group, LLC and found positive ROI for each the Associate Degree Cohort Program and the certificate program provided by the Collaborative. Costs and benefits for the Associate Degree Cohort are calculated based on past participants and extrapolated through the year 2013 – the year in which the current cohort of students will graduate from the program. The cost factors influencing ROI for the Associate Degree Cohort program included administration costs, tuition payments, increase in absences during training, and the cost of “backfilling” after participants are promoted. Benefits include reduced turnover during training and lower training costs of promoted workers compared to outside hires. Several assumptions are made in calculating the value of costs

(\$1.82 million) and benefits (\$2.04 million), and the result is a net return estimated at \$216,137, and ROI of 11.9 percent.¹ Costs and benefits for the certificate program are based on the 525 participants from 2005 to 2010 that have completed the program qualifying them for entry-level healthcare occupations. There is a larger benefit to employers through this program as the majority of costs are absorbed by the grant. The approximate net benefit per participant hired is \$4,869, which totals \$2.6 million when multiplied by the number of program completers. Additional non-quantifiable advantages include improved job performance and increased diversity in the workforce. These findings justify an organization's commitment to the Collaborative and can be used to attract more partners.

A COMPLETE SET OF SERVICES FROM A VARIETY OF PARTNERS

Partnership Building, including Leveraging Resources

Partners include four employers, three educational institutions, two community-based organizations, and three workforce investment boards and represent a diverse set of backgrounds and pool of knowledge. The broad spectrum of support allows the Collaborative to offer services that intertwine to provide the full scope of services necessary to support participants during stages as they find, maintain, and advance their careers. One partner alone lacks the sufficient resources to help meet all customers' needs. For example, community colleges, necessary for education and training, do not provide job placement or career readiness services. Likewise, employers do not always have a channel to reach out to colleges to advertise employment needs. This is where the Collaborative fills in the gaps by providing advisors and job coaches to create linkages between each partner so their services are interconnected and maximized. This results in higher academic retention and completion rates and employment performance.

Through extensive interactions among public and non-profit partners—and through direct, face-to-face employer engagement—the Collaborative has been characterized by an extraordinary degree of flexibility and agility among institutions to meet the needs of both employers and participants. For example, partners have funded and created a training facility in close proximity to clinical and employment sites, a facility which is used by multiple partners. The facility has been underwritten by multiple local, regional, and national partners since 2005. The Collaborative continuously explores potential new funding sources to support participant training and support. Partners have made changes in schedules and locations, and have altered, created, or integrated course offerings to better meet these needs.

HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED

Continuum of Participant Support

The Collaborative has learned to provide some critical participant (and employer) support to ensure success outcomes. These include: pathway readiness and assessment to ensure a good participant-career pathway-employer fit; emergency gap assistance to help participants transition through unforeseen difficulties; job retention coaches for each employer to troubleshoot issues that arise at the participant-employer interface; academic pathway advisors to work with participants to ensure progress and address any obstacles on the academic front; and a “learning community” for incumbent workers for peer support. A Student Success Network has been created and meets monthly to facilitate referrals among partners, monitor participant progress, and facilitate effective recruiting in the community. Students are afforded “early registration” at Cincinnati State and “health excel” coordinators for course advising to help accommodate those who also work full time. Because of the continuum—and the strong role of community-based organizations—the Collaborative operates under the principle of there being “no wrong door to enter.” Key lessons learned: it is critical to test upfront for “innate fit” for a health career and to spend substantial time on remedial education prior to any college-level work. And, it is essential to continue to help people with coaching regarding job performance and workplace trouble-shooting, as well as career advancement.

¹ All figures are from the *Health Careers Collaborative Return on Investment Report: 2011*, completed by The New Growth Group.

CURRICULUM CHANGES

Continuum of Participant Support

The Collaborative identified several changes to individual aspects and overall infrastructure of curricula that could improve students' preparedness for higher level classes and provide transitional skills. The Collaborative's goal is to create outcome-based curriculum that focuses on the competencies required for employment and continued education. For example, a Professionalism in Health Care class has been integrated into the sequential core curriculum to provide basic skills and background information on the industry. To train students in critical reasoning, two transition courses using personal effectiveness competency modules were implemented. Also, Cincinnati State math and chemistry faculty developed and teach two courses in integrated science, math and chemistry. The addition of these three course areas improved student retention and eliminated the need for two quarters of developmental and prerequisite courses, thereby accelerating the time required to earn a degree.

To help incumbent workers at hospitals, TriHealth, Inc. piloted a six-month program called School at Work, which is now offered by all employer partners. The program caters to entry-level workers with the goal of providing them educational resources to be eligible to advance within their organization. The program includes courses at the hospital to develop literacy and math skills that build up confidence and skills required to move onto a community college to attain a degree or short term certificate.

APPLYING SUCCESS STRATEGIES TO NEW AREAS

Sustainable Systems Change

Employer partners have changed policies related to advancing tuition and payment for developmental education coursework. Each employer has embraced the School at Work program, providing contextualized remedial education, as well as career exploration and assessment sessions on a weekly basis to employee learners. Education partners have developed integrated courses, as well as modified schedules and locations to accommodate employee-learners. The Collaborative is also moving towards a model of having all entry-level participants undergo a National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) assessment, and member institutions having a business development/placement coordinator and retention specialist function, and replicating the Collaborative's model across disciplines. The Collaborative also keeps expanding into new areas—and is now focusing on health/IT, long-term care, and biotechnology.

KEY LESSONS

The Collaborative was founded on the galvanizing principle that institutions needed to work together with employers to effectively address a nursing shortage. The founding group also agreed to the principle that they would try to “grow our own”, including helping incumbent workers move up and new local workers move into the health workforce—increasing the diversity of the health workforce and helping people who may have had no or little college experience make the transition to a health career. With those founding principles, the Collaborative got started, and has engaged in a process of continuous improvement ever since—trying some approaches, altering those strategies as feedback from employers, participants, and institutions suggested course corrections, and deepening and broadening the partnerships year by year to build trust and encourage innovation. The HCC “arena” provides a focal point that encourages collaborative effort and discourages violations of common operating principles by partnering organizations. The existence of founding principles helps to refresh the Collaborative, especially as they add new institutions, employers, or assimilate new representatives from partner organizations.

HCC DOL ARRA GRANT SCORECARD AS OF MAY 13, 2011

GRANT OBJECTIVES	1Q 2011	4Q 2010	3Q 2010	2Q 2010	1Q 2010	Cumulative	% OF GOAL
750 referred for service/education into Pathway	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
650 complete degree/certificate program	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
650 receive degree/certificate credential	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
600 credentialed placed into unsubsidized healthcare employment	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
525 retain employment for 2 Quarters*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

* This data is as reported in federal RAD system. Retention data reported from RAD is not reflecting data input from HCC G*Stars records. Inquiry made to DOL as to means to correct.

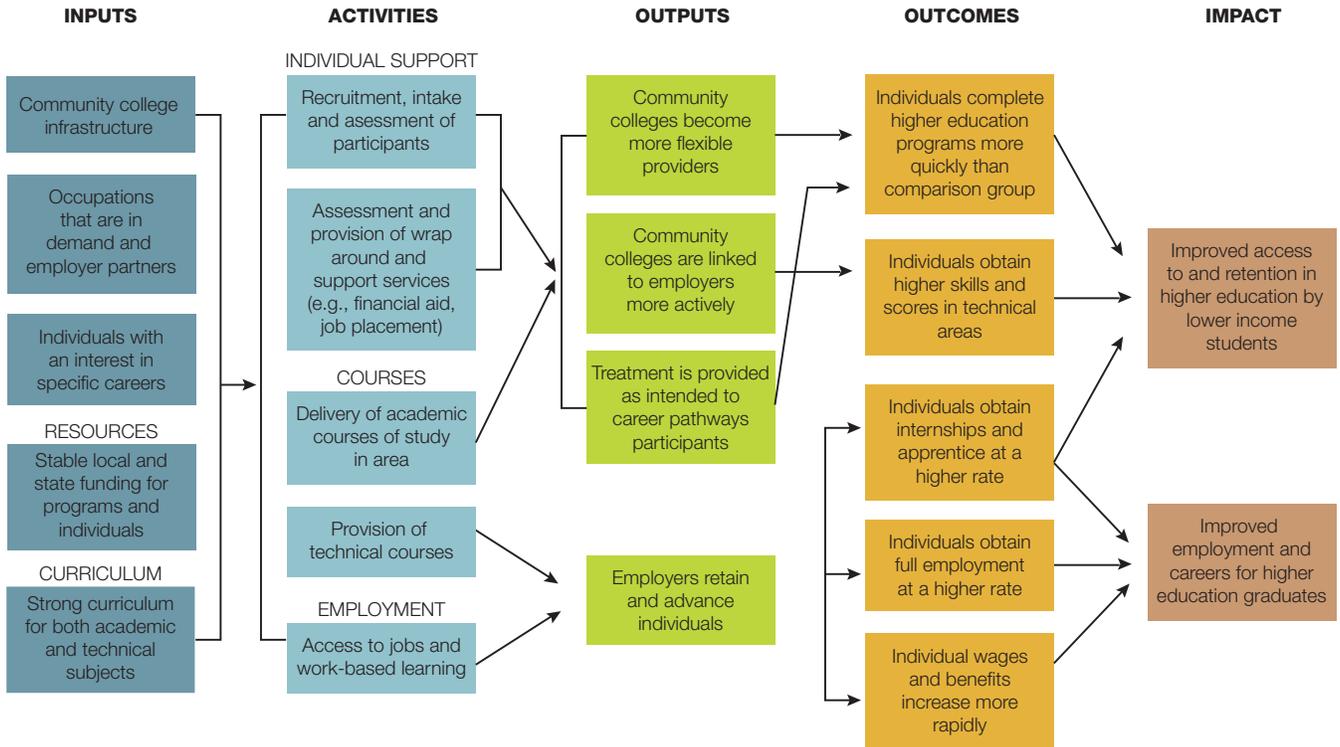
GRANT DELIVERABLE 2Q2010 STATUS	MU submitted final proposal to Ohio Board of Regents December 2010. Cincinnati State submitted LOI for Associate Degree to Board of Regents in February 2011.
Bachelor's completion degree in Health IT	

GRANT EXPENDITURES	2Q 2011	1Q 2010	4Q 2010	3Q 2010	2Q 2010	Cumulative	% Expended
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cincinnati State	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dress for Success Cincinnati	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Great Oaks	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mercy Neighborhood Ministries	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Miami University - Middletown	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TriHealth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
UC Health	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
University of Cincinnati - Clermont College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

LEVERAGE APPLIED	1Q 2011	4Q 2010	3Q 2010	2Q 2010	1Q 2010	Cumulative	% OF GOAL
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cincinnati State	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dress for Success Cincinnati	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Great Oaks**	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mercy Neighborhood Ministries	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Miami University - Middletown	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TriHealth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
UC Health	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
University of Cincinnati - Clermont College	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mercy Health Partners	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ft. Hamilton/Kettering	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
GCWN	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SWORWIB***	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unified Initial Report	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

* Tuition for EF & LF10 terms as documented by CSTCC for 2010Q4 ** HPA cost center expense, less grant reimbursements for 2010Q3&4 *** ITA funds to CSTCC & HPA for FY10

CAREER PATHWAYS THEORY OF CHANGE





THE HEALTH CAREERS COLLABORATIVE OF GREATER CINCINNATI

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This agreement is entered into by and among Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, the Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, the Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development and (Partner Name.) This MOU supersedes the original MOU dated October 1, 2006.

The above-named institutions agree that upon the commencement date of this Memorandum of Understanding, they shall be deemed to have formed The Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati. The purposes, terms and conditions of this alliance are as follows:

- I. Name - The name of the alliance shall be "The Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati".
- II. Principal places of business - The principal places of business of the partnership shall be:

Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati
Jewish Professional Building
3120 Burnet Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45229

Purpose and General Provisions - The business of The Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati is set forth below and includes any other business related thereto.

Section 1. A regional health professions partnership specializing in working with local health industry organizations, secondary, post secondary and higher education institutions and health care providers to meet the demanding needs of health care institutions.

The purpose of The Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati is to leverage human and financial resources of the partner organizations in order to avoid duplication of effort and respond rapidly and effectively to emerging workforce needs.

Section 2. The CEO's or Senior Vice President of each partner agency may appoint two representatives to sit on the Steering Committee. Each partnering agency will have one vote on all agenda action items.

Section 3. The Steering Committee will elect a Chairperson among the partnering agencies. The Steering Committee will develop the responsibilities of the Chairperson.

Section 4. The Steering Committee shall have the responsibility for ensuring that the purpose in Section 1 is carried out.

Section 5. The Steering Committee will have the authority to determine guidelines regarding the following: program selection and course offerings, curriculum development, student services, financial responsibilities and budgeting, operational procedures, and selection of staff.

The partners shall have exclusive control over the business, as long as the business is not in conflict with any bargaining agreement already in place, and each partner shall have equal rights in the management and conduct of the partnership business.

Section 6.

The Steering Committee will develop a process and criteria for adding new Partners to the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati.

Section 7. The Steering Committee will be responsible for a comprehensive data collection and tracking process. The Steering Committee will develop a quarterly report on the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati's impact of its program of work to the CEO or designee of each institution.

Section 8. The Steering Committee will be responsible for setting performance indicators for the partnership, conducting ongoing strategic planning and evaluating performance results and process metric performance.

Section 9. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that targeted student groups include: incumbent workers from our partner organizations, unemployed and underemployed workers and others who will benefit from a career pathways program with multiple entry and exit points as well as holistic student services.

Section 10. Partnering organizations may withdraw from this collaborative, at any time, by giving ninety (90) days prior written notice to the other Partners.

Section 11. Addendums to this MOU may be made at any time by written agreement among the Partners.

Section 12. This memorandum of understanding shall be subject to all Federal, State, and City regulations pertaining to matters herein, as they now exist or may hereafter be modified or amended.

Section 13. This Memorandum of Understanding shall commence on (Insert date.)

Programs and services collaboration:

The partners of the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati will:

1. Develop a proposal response process to include one grant writing resource person from each institution.
2. Develop a process to research and develop new health occupations training areas.
3. Great Oaks will be the fiscal agent for the partnership.
4. The partners of the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati will collaborate on the following:
 - Provide Assessment, Readiness and Remediation services
 - Develop Customized training leading to employability, job retention, credentialing, and/or career advancement
 - Develop Credit bearing course offerings leading to Associate, Baccalaureate and advanced degrees
 - Provide holistic services to address the life issues of our adult learners
 - Research and apply for local, state and federal grants
 - Disseminate lessons learned, and "best practices" developed through the Health Careers Collaborative
 - Other initiatives as identified by the Steering Committee.

VI. Disputes - Disputes that would jeopardize new programs, course offerings, contracts, or existing clients/ students and cannot be resolved by individual organizations will be submitted to the Steering Committee for input and guidance.

Signatures of the Partners

Date

Date

Date

columbus state community college

Columbus, Ohio

SGA Type - Healthcare and Other High Growth Emerging Industries

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Columbus State Community College's (CSCC) LogisticsART program addresses a growing regional, eight county need for a logistics workforce by preparing and training participants for careers in the logistics industry. Before beginning the program, all trainees are required to participate in an orientation about the program and the logistics industry itself. They are also given an "ability" assessment that determines their "fit" in relation to the attributes necessary to be successful in a logistics career. The program incorporates both classroom and technical training to prepare participants to receive a "21st Century Workplace Skills Certificate," confirming that they have acquired a broad range of basic employability workplace skills.



Cheryl Hay
chay3@csc.edu

PROMISING PRACTICES

ENGAGING COMMUNITY PARTNERS BOOSTS PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Partnership Building

Working to train entry-level and incumbent workers to succeed in the growing logistics industry, the CSCC LogisticsART program is successfully partnering with the credit-side of the community college, multiple counties and their WIBs, local companies, and community organizations. One area that stands out is their ability to leverage partnerships with non-profits and other local organizations to boost participant recruitment beyond the WIB structure. CSCC is reaching out to potential participants through various entities including: the library, Jewish Family Services, the YMCA, the Child Support Enforcement Agency, the United Way, the Columbus Urban League's fatherhood support program, and local business chaired recruitment groups such as REAN and CEAN. Outreach efforts that include job fairs are resulting in the attraction of program participants with a wide range of educational backgrounds, including bachelor's and master's degree holders who have suffered employment dislocation. This population is not easily accessible through the regional WIB structure.

LogisticsART is increasing program accessibility by conducting training in eight counties. This structure best meets industry and program participant needs. For businesses, this program delivers training in areas identified as matching the demonstrated employee commuter patterns of logistic businesses. For example, one company looking to hire 300 workers was located 45 miles from the current outreach center and neighborhood of many current participants. Training will now be offered in the county where the company is located in an attempt to solicit dislocated individuals from the surrounding regions. This is also one of two counties most affected by automotive dislocations. In addition, the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services is working with CSCC to develop a mailing to send to individuals currently receiving unemployment benefits (UI) based on a Zip Code list provided by the businesses. Providing the program in multiple counties allows individuals

without access to transportation to still receive training. These individuals are able to secure rides to work in the counties where both logistics employers are located and the employees currently live. Also, it addresses dislocated participant issues related to having the funds to pay for gas to get to training. Both are broadening participant numbers and increasing the chances of graduates securing employment. The State of Ohio Board of Regents hopes to provide educational access within 30 miles of every participant, and this training program delivery meets that vision.

EFFECTIVE CAREER CHOICE THROUGH THE USE OF TALENT ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Continuum of Participant Support

The LogisticsART program is using the SHL Manufacturing Toolbox to assess the critical attributes and behaviors associated with successful job performance in the logistics warehouse environment. The tool was selected by the business partners and screens for attributes ranging from understanding instructions and working with numbers to critical job fit characteristics such as teamwork, detail consciousness and dependability. Assessment results are shared with applicants during an hour-long one-on-one counseling session with a career facilitator. The information from the assessment is used to guide the participants' decision-making process and help them to determine if their work style is a good fit for a successful career in logistics. By assessing candidates' skill sets up front, it ensures that employers will receive a pool of qualified candidates to make their organization more efficient and profitable.

FULL-TIME COUNSELOR CRITICAL TO PARTICIPANT SUCCESS

Continuum of Participant Support & Leveraging Resources

Having a full-time counselor and ongoing job search strategies that the LogisticsART program provides have been key components to successfully support participants. One of the counselor's main roles has been to leverage access to resources and make these available to participants. This has included gathering partners to provide medicine, health care, dental, vision, clothes and other services, including efforts to make eyeglasses and suits available for participants. This resource gathering has been essential in both preparing participants for class attendance and meeting other needs that distract them from focusing on their employment goals. The counselor also provides career counseling advice, including reviewing assessment tool results and directing participants to additional training programs at no cost. They also provide ongoing job search assistance including applying for employment via the Internet.

ENGAGING PARTNERS AND INCREASING PLACEMENT THROUGH MOCK INTERVIEWS

Partnership Building & Employer Engagement

Mock interviewing has been an important part of the program, in both boosting participant success and keeping partners engaged. Companies from multiple industries have taken part in mock interviews to prepare participants for the hiring process. Employers who have participated have told others in their professional network about the mock interviews, and LogisticsART now receives calls from industry professionals volunteering their time to conduct mock interviews. This has also led to placement as mock interviewers have hired candidates, even in industries unrelated to the logistics training such as healthcare, which has broadened the program's placement opportunities.

The mock interview process has boosted participant success, evident from feedback from a former program participant:

"I must say that most everything that I was taught, I was able to use in my interview, right down to the cover letter that I had never even heard of before going to class, along with the correct Resume for the job, and putting together a portfolio of my documentation, awards, and Certificates awarded there at Columbus State. I really think that my employer was caught off guard of me being so prepared upon coming to the interview that they could not say NO, to hiring me over anyone else."

And, in one case, CSCC had a former participant encourage his new employer's human resource member to participate in the mock interview portion of the program.

GROWTH IN PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CREDIT AND NON-CREDIT SIDES OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Partnership Building & Leveraging Resources

Columbus State, like many other community colleges, offers both credit and non-credit programs. There is often a divide between those two educational offerings. Historically, non-credit functions have been viewed as a less challenging delivery approach; the credentials of the instructors are not often as rigorous as credit faculty requirements, the length of the programming is believed to be too short to offer any viable participant pre/post outcomes, and the offerings are generally categorized as appealing to potentially less-educated populations. Non-credit divisions often view credit offerings as less flexible in modifying delivery options beyond quarter/semester timelines, not as willing to incorporate updated industry skill norms in curricula or incorporate out-of-the-box thinking in curricula development and delivery, and credit instructors are not as apt in engaging business audiences as they are traditional student audiences. The

LogisticsART program has begun to overcome some of these barriers. Having partners within the credit function who have industry backgrounds has been instrumental in integrating instructional delivery and awarding credit to non-credit developed programming. One such partnership resulted in the program's offering of the 21st Century Workplace Skills certificate, a CSCC credit certification program, which carries four credit hours.

In addition to having a strong individual partner on the credit side, LogisticsART has taken three specific steps to engage partners across the Columbus State campus:

- **Develop a campus-wide project kickoff strategy:** When the project was first rolled out, LogisticsART called a meeting of all departments on campus that might touch the project in any way. LogisticsART likened this to any "business" that would convene a meeting of their accounting, marketing, sales, technology, R&D and other functions to roll out a new product. The kickoff meeting involved 35 college representatives from several separate functions: credit admissions, credit career counseling, business office, human resources, grants office, academic area deans, IA/marketing, purchasing, legal, non-credit, and transitional workforce, among others. Since this was the first time CSCC's campus attempted to launch a non-credit program that would also become a potential doorway to several credit programs, there was initial resistance to convening this group. At the meeting, LogisticsART staff outlined the project deliverables and timelines. Spontaneously, attendees then began to brainstorm in small groups about potential system barriers and how to overcome them, even organizing additional meetings to ensure barrier eliminations.
- **Distribution of campus-wide graduation invitations:** The LogisticsART program continues to reach out to partners across the college by inviting all of those entities to campus graduation events. This initiative puts a "face" to the program on campus and makes

it less abstract. The stories graduates share at the graduation ceremony empower all college partners with a sense of the role they play in positively affecting lives through the program.

- **Publicize success:** LogisticsART publicizes program and participant outcomes, stories and testimonials to the larger campus through e-mails to stakeholders. This outreach strategy helps all involved partners understand their role in the delivery of the program, from instruction to paying the invoices. By communicating success stories, LogisticsART sustains program momentum and commitment to the participants served by the program.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH STATE AGENCIES BUILDS RESOURCE NETWORK

Partnership Building, Leveraging Resource & Alignment with Economic Development

At the onset of the grant, LogisticsART developed an oversight committee of the Ohio Board of Regents, Ohio Department of Development, and Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. These agencies have provided expertise on how to utilize the workforce system, publicized the work of LogisticsART to other potential partners, and offered assistance in outreach to participants, educators, businesses and other state agencies. The oversight committee has also led to a greater connection between workforce efforts in the state and best practices sharing that can be funneled into other programs.

ENGAGING EMPLOYERS FROM START TO FINISH

Employer Engagement

The LogisticsART program engaged the logistics industry through the entire process of curriculum design and development, curriculum delivery, and participant placement. Rather than working with individual companies, CSCC has worked with a group of logistics companies that came together, driven by a need for more entry-level employees and better trained incumbent workers.

Working through the Columbus Chamber of Commerce's Columbus Region Logistics Council and the Ohio Skills Bank Logistics Employer Panel, 16 logistics companies consistently came together and agreed on specific gaps in training and the need for the creation of an entry-level program. Four core companies then worked together to develop a curriculum that was approved by the larger group of companies.

Companies are engaged in delivery of curriculum as well. CSCC is the site for two out of three components of the entry-level training program, job-readiness and the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Logistics Certificate Program. Two companies are currently the sites for logistics training, which is better conducted on an actual warehouse floor than in a simulated warehouse. Incorporating partner employers into the program's technical training gives the program credibility with businesses: this partnership illustrates that LogisticsART is serious about providing "real world" exposure and that they truly value what businesses can provide in the education of program participants.

The LogisticsART program's success in engaging employers has translated into success in placement, even among populations that face placement challenges. Because employers have become so involved, they have gained a better understanding of the challenges participants face; employers take time to consider and employ particular populations, such as ex-offenders and those without a high school diploma.

LogisticsART continues to reach out to new companies through the recent addition of a full-time business representative. In addition, a legal firm specializing in servicing the logistics industry has offered to post employment opportunities and graduates' resumes on their web site. This facilitates with placement as the firm's website has been a go-to site for job openings in the industry for years and is accessed by over 600 employers across the nation.

PARTNERSHIP WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LINKS TRAINING TO BROADER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Employer Engagement; Alignment with Economic Development

The Columbus Chamber of Commerce has been a vital partner in LogisticART's training program. The Chamber opened the door to the Columbus Region Logistics Council (CRLC), an industry grouping of logistics employers, which has engaged business in a viable way. This group was already assembled around developing an overall business retention, expansion and attraction strategy for the logistics sector, with a committee focused on education/workforce. The CRLC conducts a job fair four times a year and now incorporates into these events LogisticART's placement needs. In addition, businesses and placement agencies attend each of LogisticART's graduation events to screen candidates for employment.

Both credit and non-credit functions have been made partners in the employer council. Because LogisticsART has proven to be a great support to business needs, the Chamber includes them in almost every site selector visit that occurs in the region.

pathways out of poverty

jobs for the future

southwest housing solutions

mdc, inc.

west hills community college district

northern rural training & employment
consortium

workforce development council of
seattle-king county

private industry council of
westmoreland-fayette, inc.

the workplace, inc.

jobs for the future

Boston, Massachusetts

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Jobs for the Future (JFF) is working to dramatically ramp up pathways into green industries for unemployed and disadvantaged individuals in low income neighborhoods of five cities that have been seriously impacted by the economic downturn. These cities are Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia. Through its Pathways Out of Poverty grant, JFF is delivering expanded education, training, career coaching, job placement, and retention services in these communities. This has been made possible through local affiliates to the National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS), which is a \$30 million project that expands high impact workforce partnership initiatives across the country.



Gerri Scott
gscott@jff.org

PROMISING PRACTICES

FUNDING COLLABORATIVES STRENGTHEN TRAINING CAPACITY

Partnership Building & Leveraging Resources

Jobs for the Future is working through the National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS) to implement its DOL training grant. The NFWS is a philanthropically-led initiative to form regional funding collaboratives that invest in sectoral workforce partnerships, capacity building, and improving the workforce delivery system in their regions. This initiative was in place before JFF received the DOL grant and JFF has used its structure, and the built-in best practices, to ensure effectiveness in implementing the DOL grant.

The NFWS has launched a number of voluntarily-formed collaboratives that strategically align and co-invest philanthropic, private and public resources in specific training partnerships that focus on strengthening sectors and making the workforce system more responsive to economic development. When JFF applied for the DOL Pathways grant, it invited any of the funding collaboratives that had training partnerships in green sectors to join the Pathway's work.

Many of JFF's best practices are built in through the basic model of the funding collaborative. The funding collaboratives have a common governance system and share a common model. Each collaborative has a chair and a staff person who serves as the collaborative manager. Collaboratives have used funding leveraged from foundations to fund capacity building for the sectoral workforce partnerships supported through the Pathways grant. Each month, funding collaboratives convene all the workforce Partnerships engaged in the green Pathways Out of Poverty initiative as a group to review progress and share strategies.

The workforce partnership model includes a strategic focus on a particular sector, a designated organization that is the convener, and the provision of a full package of services including working with employers to identify important credentials, and providing literacy support, career coaching, and case management. Partners have a memorandum of agreement that lays out specific roles and expectations based on each organization's

core competencies in providing services. Outcomes are attributed to the entire workforce partnership to encourage collaboration among service providers in preparing participants for career-focused jobs. The collaboratives that are partnering with JFF in the Pathways grant must also recruit their participants from high poverty PUMAs.

Even as the five collaboratives engaged in the Pathways grant share best practices because they share a common structure and strategy, they also share more practical best practices with each other through JFF's convening and technical assistance role. JFF facilitates a monthly call with the project coordinators from each collaborative, which has provided a forum for discussion and sharing of more targeted and practical best practices, such as the sharing of a good description for a job coach.

WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS ENGAGE EMPLOYERS FROM THE START TO FINISH

Employer Engagement, Partnership Building, Data-Driven Decision Making & Alignment with Economic Development

Each workforce partnership works with a specific set of employers that are engaged before the collaborative starts to put the program together. In this way, the workforce partnership takes place not just within a particular sector, but with specific set of employers in that sector. Funding collaboratives will not support a particular training program unless it is clear that employers have been engaged in program design and that the program addresses a particular challenge that employers face. No workforce partnership receives funding unless it can demonstrate active employer engagement from the start—in fact, the employers have to come to the award interview with the partnership.

At the early stages of program development, the partnership manager is in close contact with a specific set of employers about needs, hiring criteria, where hiring is taking place, whether they are hiring for entry level positions, the amount of training that potential hires would need (e.g., two months versus ten months), and the specific credentials and skills level they are looking

for. Before gathering this information from employers, the collaboratives use state LMI data for occupations in the selected sectors to guide program design and then fine tune the information based on the priorities of the specific employer partners.

Employers continue to be engaged throughout the training program: employers are often brought in to do guest lectures and mock interviews. Creating opportunities for employer-to-employer networking, such as career fairs, has been an effective way to engage new employers. In Philadelphia, the collaborative hosted a career fair for employers that attracted the participation of numerous employers and resulted in a number of contractors volunteering to offer training to students in particular skill set areas.

Another important piece of employer engagement has been to involve employers in program oversight. The partnership manager follows up with employers after trainees complete the program to assess the quality of the training and to identify changes needed in particular training components. This feedback is used in conjunction with data from pre and post-tests that assess participant skill gains. Project teams meet monthly to review this data and to re-plan as needed. The collaboratives have sometimes commissioned independent labor market studies to guide this re-planning.

CONTEXTUALIZED LITERACY PROGRAM BOOSTS BASIC SKILLS

Continuum of Participant Support

In Philadelphia, Jobs for the Future is engaged in a partnership led by the Federation of Neighborhood Centers to provide contextualized literacy and pre-occupational training, followed by occupational training in energy efficient building practices. The nine week program is aimed at participants with high barriers to employment, such as welfare participants, ex-offenders, and the long-term unemployed. The program provides 40 hours of training each week: 20 hours focused on basic literacy and math skills matched with 20 hours of applied vocational skills training. The literacy and math portions of the training are tightly focused on the math and reading skills that participants will need to succeed

in the workplace. The instructional practice is based on peer learning, teaching participants to see themselves and each other as resources who work collaboratively on problems. This approach builds the critical soft skills that employers describe as essential for productive employees.

The Federation of Neighborhood Centers worked with local employers to determine which skills are most important to them and then focused the training in four areas that were identified: reading comprehension, business writing, computational math, and applied math. The basic training, which occurs each morning, incorporates vocabulary and concepts that are related to vocational skills that the participants learn in the afternoon sessions. The nine week preparation program has served 74 participants, many starting with TABE tests in the 5th grade range. Participants in the program have increased their ability in the four focus areas by at least two grade levels, with some increasing up to five grade levels during the nine week program.

Following the nine week program, approximately two-thirds of the participants continue into different higher skilled occupational trainings (such as solar panel installation instruction or foam weatherization installation), some paid for by the Pathways grant and some paid for by WIA vouchers. Case managers from the Federation of Neighborhood Centers continue to work with participants being trained by other vendors to provide career counseling, monitor attendance and progress, and connect them to support services during this second phase of their preparation for employment. FNC coordinates job development with its partner, the Sustainable Business Network, when participants are job ready, and provides “job club” and other retention support after placement.

Contextualized literacy programs are likewise built into a number of the training programs across the collaboratives that are engaged in the Pathways grant. The literacy and basic skills component is integrated into each, but each conducts it differently. In Detroit, the workforce partnership is using a four week contextualized literacy program that draws on a “Green for All” curriculum called “Roots of Success.”

A UNIQUE ASSESSMENT TOOL GAUGES WHETHER JOB IS BEST FIT FOR APPLICANTS

Continuum of Participant Support

Jobs for the Future and the Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance (MAWFA) fund a workforce partnership between the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) and the Milwaukee Department of Public Works to provide training that meets the Department of Public Works' recent surge in demand for urban arborists. They have developed a successful partnership in training the workers to meet the demand for tree trimmers. WRTP does the recruitment, assessment, ongoing case management, job development and placement. The Department of Public Works donated their six month training curriculum as well as their own personnel for training. MAWFA provides leveraged funds to a third partner, River Works, to provide financial literacy training and post-placement follow up services.

WRTP worked with the Department of Public Works to determine the entry requirements for an arborist position and developed a unique assessment tool to ensure that program applicants would be successful in the training and in the job. Arborists recognize that handling power tools and mastery of biological and chemical herbicides are only part of the job. So the program puts applicants through a week-long orientation prior to making the final selections to participate in the six-month training. In addition to administering a reading comprehension and applied math skills test, conducting an interview, and determining that child care and other support service needs are met, the assessment includes physical fitness tests and watching videos of the work they will be trained to do. At the end of the orientation, applicants must demonstrate that they can get into a harness, go up 30 feet, and get out onto a tree branch before they are admitted into the program.

This intensive situational assessment pays off. Of the 26 people who started the first cycle of the six month training, 22 completed the program and each of them is now employed in a training-related job.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS AND LABOR MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS DRIVE UP PLACEMENTS

Partnership Building

One strategy that the funding collaboratives have used to increase placements is to partner closely with public sector organizations such as Departments of Transportation, Housing Authorities, and Water and Sewer to align their programs with major infrastructure projects in the region.

In Milwaukee, the Water and Sewer Department and the Housing Authority are active in funding the collaborative and are very engaged in its success. When the two agencies have contracts, they place an expectation on contractors to meet a local hiring requirement by using the collaborative's trainees. (This local hiring requirement is frequently a term on public works contracts, but contractors across the country will often pay a fine instead of meeting this requirement.) The two agencies have stepped in to connect contractors to the collaborative's training programs and to boost the number of local hires.

The Milwaukee funding collaborative has also been successful in placing trainees through its relationship with WRTP, a local labor management organization. WRTP has strong relationships with organized labor who now inform WRTP when union contracts are being awarded and when new jobs are available for apprentices.

mdc, inc.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Though the South has a sizeable population of jobseekers, many are underprepared to take advantage of potential green jobs coming to the region. Community colleges in high-poverty areas are uniquely suited to bridge this gap by becoming hubs that connect workers with incoming green jobs through outreach, training, and support. While community colleges are experts at job training, they are less accustomed to roles that include placement and support systems. MDC's leadership and technical assistance is enabling colleges to build strong partnerships to clear the path for individuals in poverty from skill-building to training to employment, with the requisite support along the way. Through Career Pathways for a Green South, MDC is targeting displaced and low-wage workers and unemployed individuals in high-poverty communities (both rural and urban) in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. By bolstering the skills and educational credentials of these workers—many of whom live in areas where low educational attainment is historically tied to disappearing manufacturing industries—MDC is connecting them and their communities to growing opportunities for green jobs in the region. MDC is working with four community colleges in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. These sites represent both rural and urban communities that have suffered large manufacturing job losses in recent years; they are also communities where significant numbers of people live in poverty, without sufficient education and skills for living-wage employment and career advancement.



Colin Austin
caustin@mdcinc.org

PROMISING PRACTICES

DIVERSE APPROACHES TAKEN BY COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Partnership Building And Employer Engagement

All four training providers for Career Pathways for a Green South are community colleges. These colleges have been good at adapting and making changes as the program goes along, with each taking a different approach. For example, Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap, Virginia, is using longer term training that combines basic skills and contextualized green construction training with a GED program. They expect to run an extra session of the training during the life of the grant. Mountain Empire Community College has been able to establish a much deeper relationship with the local public workforce system and this has greatly helped program efforts. In this region, the community action agency also manages the One-Stop center. Leveraged relationships with this agency have given them the ability to tap into OJT funds and have resulted in increased recruitment and employment.

At Trident Technical College in Charleston, South Carolina, they have a shorter term weatherization program that also includes basic skills and a remedial refresher. Trident Tech has partnered with a local environmentally focused community organization called the Sustainability Institute. This partnership includes recruitment support and some technical (content expertise) support to the college. Trident Tech is also developing a historic homes weatherization certification based on market projections in the Charleston, SC area. Currently, they are reaching out to a number of contractors to help make the case for weatherization.

At the suggestion of employer partners, Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina has expanded its training to better meet the wants and needs of participants and employers. Originally, the college had one program in green construction, and the other in green technology. The green construction program turned out to be less popular with students, so the program was changed and more technical skills such as systems maintenance, energy efficiency principles, and HVAC were added to the core curriculum which primarily consisted of specific construction skills. Their partnership with employers really helped with this change in strategy and the program now includes the Green Advantage Certificate.

UTILIZING A HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORT MODEL

Sustainable Systems Change & Continuum of Participant Support

A key element of all of these community college partnerships is that these are colleges that want to innovate; they are all part of a national effort to transform community colleges (Achieving the Dream, <http://www.achievingthedream.org/>). The colleges have gotten serious about working with partners to support students in a deeper and more holistic way than before. MDC is helping these community college program leads or department leads institutionalize an innovation or demonstration pilot at the college. MDC is helping the colleges become a part of a network of practice and helping them to better understand how grant activities and objectives can help them meet their metrics. For example, MDC is able to show the colleges how the Career Pathways for a Green South can increase student retention and student completion. Additionally, the colleges are changing their approach and now thinking of the student in a more holistic way. For example, MDC is encouraging the colleges to bundle their services by increasing additional student supports such as tackling transportation barriers, helping them access public benefits, and focusing on employment along with college completion.

To increase the college's focus on holistic student support, Central Piedmont Community College has changed its staffing of the grant program and added an advisor and a recruiter/job developer position. The college realized that it needed job development support and needed to bring in that expertise- someone who could work on connections with employment and employers. The job developer spends much of their time outside of the college, in the community recruiting participants and connecting with employers. These job connection activities are guided by individual employment plans for students, rather than simple referrals like in the past. The employment plans help to clarify student interests and direction and is used to track educational and employment goals. Central Piedmont also has several employers that participate on an advisory council who provide feedback related to curriculum and skill needs. Feedback from this council has helped to reconfigure their Green Advantage training making it a much more marketable certificate by connecting it more closely with industry needs and projected job demand.

Career Pathways for a Green South is helping program colleges take a more active and expanded role with managing employment relationships for students, an area not traditionally focused on within community colleges. The grant is helping participating colleges bring together economic development, education and training, and connections with local industry. This is a new vision where community colleges take a leading role to help people through meaningful partnerships, and where staff is out in the community working with CEOs, employers, and WIBs for the benefit of students. Mount Empire Community College provides a good example of this vision. It partners with its local adult education agency and WIBs, and has a strong relationship with the local community action agency.

MDC is using a systems change model called the SCALERS model from the Duke University Fuqua School of Business (<http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/current-issue-scaling-impact/scaling-social-entrepreneurial-impact-the-scalers-model>). This model focuses on how to drive social innovation to scale. The model provides a way to think about the scale strategies that work for each individual college. What “scale” means in a small rural college with one campus and 6,000 students is different from a much larger college with multiple campuses and many more students. In addition, the model helps the colleges think through and determine program elements such as areas of program value, areas that should be expanded, organizational capacity, and sustainability planning.

MDC is also using the Success Factors Framework internally as a guide for implementation and has created an action planning document based on the Framework that is used to guide discussions with the community colleges during site visits. They plan to apply the SCALERS model to Success Factors Framework using it to show how the colleges can take what they have achieved and documented in the Framework and expand/scale it up within their college.

PARTNERSHIPS AID EX-OFFENDERS

Participant Support (Ex-Offenders)

Orangeburg- Calhoun Technical College reaches many students who are ex-offenders. They have taken an active approach in partnering with the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs, which allows them to offer criminal record expungement services for participants. This strategy is fairly new and the impact in employment numbers has not yet been realized, but the partners believe that this is a strong model.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY – FROM MEALS TO GAS CARDS

Leveraging Resources & Continuum of Participant Support

In an effort to support student success, Trident Technical Community College found that a number of students who attended their three week intensive training program did not have enough money for lunch each day. The college found ways to leverage resources to provide meals for students.

At Mountain Empire Technical College, the rising costs of gas coupled with the fact that the area does not have public transportation, became a major issue for student program retention. The college resolved this issue by providing students in need with gas cards.

Along with this grant, MDC manages other program funded initiatives related to remedial education and basic skills attainment. They intentionally share information and experience from those different efforts among various grant partners.

northern rural training & employment consortium

Chico, California

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) will train and place participants for employment in energy renewal and efficiency industry clusters. The project will leverage activities under NoRTEC's regional workforce development project that includes a focus on renewable energy. The project will provide training programs including the California Clean Energy Workforce Training Program and Green Building Pre-Apprenticeship Program. Training will be provided in five tiers to build skills such as reading, writing, interpersonal skills, and problem solving, as well as industry-wide and industry specific training and will build knowledge and skills in areas such as environmental laws and regulations or industry principles.

The North State is one of the largest regions in California, covering slightly more than 25 percent of California's geographic area. The region is predominantly rural, with only two population hubs (over 50,000), City of Chico and City of Redding. The North State region is defined by the service territory of the Northern Rural Training & Employment Consortium (NoRTEC). NoRTEC is a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) of 11 counties in North State - Butte, Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity. NoRTEC administers the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for the 11 counties. A Governing Board and Workforce Investment Board (WIB) oversee NoRTEC's programs and initiatives.

NoRTEC's core services are funded through the federal WIA, allocated to the State Labor Agency and then disbursed to WIBs throughout California. There are five One-Stop Employment Centers with offices in the 11 counties which administer the **core services** including programs and resources for employers, businesses, job seekers, youth, children and families.



Stewart Knox
sknox@ncen.org

PROMISING PRACTICES

NoRTEC's GUIDING PHILOSOPHY: BUSINESS FIRST

NoRTEC's guiding philosophy is that serving business will lead to job creation and development of workforce skills for those jobs. NoRTEC has been a catalyst for connecting workforce and economic development -supplementing local services and funding through competitive applications to state and federal agencies and partnering with numerous education and economic development entities throughout the North State.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR GREEN Data-Driven Decision Making

In 2008, NoRTEC received a Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant to focus on industry clusters of opportunities as well as other initiatives. Through this WIRED initiative, NoRTEC started looking at renewable energy and began mobilizing a renewable energy cluster in the region. During the summer of 2008, NoRTEC held a large event where they brought together 120 employers involved in core green activities in the region. They used this meeting to learn directly from the green employers what they were doing and what they planned on doing in the future.

Although there was no funding for green activities at the time, NoRTEC felt that there was both economic and workforce potential in focusing on renewable energy in the region. They continued engaging in renewable energy cluster work for three months—collecting as much data as possible and looking at where the largest opportunities for growth were, based on the North State's agricultural economy. After having more

discussions with 15 to 20 business owners, they became certain that renewable energy held some potential and staying power in the region. The research and planning had already been done, so once the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) passed in early 2009 and funding become available for renewable energy work, NoRTEC was ready to implement their green programs.

COORDINATING ACROSS MULTIPLE GRANTS TO DEVELOP A SEAMLESS APPROACH Leveraging Resources

NoRTEC has positioned itself at the nexus of local, state, and national initiatives to expand existing and to stimulate emerging green industries and occupations in its region. In late 2009/early 2010, NoRTEC secured two State green grants—the California Clean Energy Workforce Training Program (CCEWTP) grant and the Regional Industry Clusters of Opportunity grant (RICO). NoRTEC's \$2,000,000 CCEWTP grant allowed them to focus on training individuals with barriers to employment through the community college system.

Around the same time they began CCEWTP grant implementation, NoRTEC applied for the Pathways Out of Poverty grant as an opportunity to build upon their base of employer groups and leverage the entry level job opportunities that would open up from people advancing in the green workforce through other grants. What linked the Pathways grant to NoRTEC's already established green grants wasn't money but the curriculum already designed under the other two green grants. With working curriculum, NoRTEC saw an opportunity for career pathways to be built between the two funded programs.

NoRTEC and its One-Stop Network took the lead in applying for several grants to begin “seeding” action-oriented green projects:

NoRTEC's GREEN GRANTS	Year	Funding Amount	Grant Description
USDA Rural Development Assistance	March 2009	\$99,000	Green Business Assistance
California Clean Energy Grant 1A	October 2009	\$1,000,000	Green Career Pathways
California Clean Energy Grant 2A	October 2009	\$1,000,000	Green Career Pathways & Apprenticeships
Pathways Out of Poverty	January 2010	\$4,000,000	Special Populations/Green Pathways
State Energy Sector Partnership	January 2010	\$900,000	Special Populations/Green Pathways
Green Innovation Challenge Grant	June 2010	\$3,500,000	R&D and Green Innovation
PG&E Innovation Lab Grant	January 2011	\$10,000	R&D Innovation Lab
CED Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant	February 2011	\$370,000	City/County Energy Efficiency Retrofits
USDA Rural Development RMAPS Grant (new program)	March 2011	\$75,000	Biofuels Asset Mapping
USDA Rural Development RCDI Grant (waiting award approval)	TBD	\$300,000	Rural Communities/Economic Development Mapping
PG&E Innovator Pilot Grant (waiting award approval)	TBD	\$600,000	Community Assessment/EE Retrofit Chico

In addition to grant awards, funds were leveraged from the City of Chico funding support for the Innovation Lab (incubator) and over \$500,000 committed, in-kind time and expertise, from private businesses.

The Pathways grant is unique for NoRTEC because it is more structured around the jobseeker side than many of their other grants. Due to the heavy emphasis on jobseekers and special populations, a good portion of their Pathways funding is focused on case management time and hours spent on the jobseeker. At the same time, NoRTEC would have trouble meeting their grant outcomes without the employer connections that they've already established.

NoRTEC does not view their multiple grants as siloed programs. Instead, NoRTEC's grants align around a single vision of jobs for the local area. Other than cost allocation plans, NoRTEC feels that programs and services should be seamless to jobseekers and employers. Stewart Knox, Director of NoRTEC, explained that employers and job-seekers do not necessarily know where one program starts and another one starts. As a grantee, NoRTEC is responsible for carefully tracking which grant is funding which project activities, and for checking job-seeker eligibility against the proper criteria. But to its customers, NoRTEC presents its programs as a single menu of services, which helps to avoid confusing its customers with the complexities of multiple funding sources.

USING A FRAMEWORK TO FOCUS THEIR EFFORTS

Leveraging Resources & Sustainable Systems Change

Although the WIRED grant was not the first time that NoRTEC began doing cluster work in the region, through their WIRED initiative their work became much more strategic. They began to use the cluster work model and think about how resources could be deployed and leveraged in a logical way. From that point forward, all of NoRTEC's work and initiatives were framed and evolved out of clusters.

NoRTEC also aims to build strategic capacity throughout the region by jointly leveraging expertise and applying for funds from various resources - state, federal and private entities, to support cluster development and job creation initiatives. NoRTEC uses a framework of six guiding principles to determine involvement in new initiatives:

- **Is there** a need (demand driven)?
- **Is there** job opportunity (new or retained)?
- **Is there** regional economic benefit?
- **Is it** tied to an industry cluster or innovation?
- **Does it** improve or protect the environment (i.e. reduce greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency, etc.)?
- **Is it** transformational or sustainable?

If a project meets these criteria, NoRTEC develops a plan which might not necessarily include funding. For example, since NoRTEC has determined the importance of healthcare jobs locally, as grants opportunities arise, they will have plans in place that they can institute quickly to meet the needs of the funder. NoRTEC's project areas are driven by their local community needs; they will not continue to seek out funding in an area if the industry focus is no longer important to their local community.

EARLY AND SUSTAINED COLLABORATION WITH PAROLE DEPARTMENTS KEY TO EX-OFFENDER SUCCESS

Continuum of Participant Support & Partnership Building

NoRTEC coordinates with educational institutions, probation and parole departments and veteran groups, to help identify potential high-school dropouts, ex-offenders and veterans to enter their training programs. In terms of outreach to ex-offenders, NoRTEC has found

that probation departments are key. California has one of the highest repetitive return-to-prison rates. The longer an ex-offender is without work, the higher likelihood that they'll return to prison. The sooner NoRTEC knows the ex-offenders' exit dates, the sooner the case manager can start working with this population. NoRTEC works hard to make the case to the probation officers that working together is a win-win. Parole officers' jobs are to keep offenders out of jail and NoRTEC's job is to train and place this population. The best way to keep someone out of jail is a sustainable job. Some probation officers have been skeptical of NoRTEC's role, but once the win-win case is made it becomes a co-case management situation. Over time, NoRTEC has learned that it is essential to work with the local county probation department in the area where the ex-offender last committed the crime because this is where they are returned. They look at the statistics of where the returning population is going, then reach out to the appropriate local entities.

Nonprofit agencies in the region including the Alliance for Workforce Development, Job Training Center, Rural Human Services, Smart Center, STEP Center, are involved in coordinating with the probation departments—they know the probation department release dates and complete an assessment process so ex-offenders can more easily enter employment once they are released from prison. Part of the issue with ex-offenders is that they do not meet eligibility requirements when they exit prison—they may lack a valid I.D., social security card, driver's license, or I9, for example. Local probation departments can help to get documentation before the ex-offenders exit prison, which ensures quicker training enrollment. It is also good practice to get a list of certifications or trainings that they've completed while in prison. Engaging in these upfront activities has helped in matching ex-offenders to the proper training programs.

There are typically trust issues with employers hiring individuals from special populations such as ex-offenders. Strong relationships that NoRTEC has developed with local employers have allowed them to place a large amount of ex-offenders. Although it is not possible to guarantee to employers that they will not be burned by hiring ex-offenders, NoRTEC establishes trust with employers in their region and works with them to manage the situation if anything goes wrong.

THE KEY TO HIGH PLACEMENT: A CONTINUOUS ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Employer Engagement & Sustainable Systems Change

The impact of these strong partnerships and outreach to employers is exemplified by NoRTEC's high placement numbers in their other programs (their Pathways grant is still in progress). Their mission is to get people into employment rather than just training them, and they work with local employers to make sure the jobs are there. Through their Regional Industry Clusters of Opportunities Grant and with other grants, NoRTEC looks at LMI data to understand the demand, and verifies this data with employer groups to confirm that jobs will be available. In addition, NoRTEC follows up with trainees to make sure the training is having the desired impact; based on this information, they decide whether to continue the training or tweak it. They are also constantly tweaking their training based on employer needs. The WIB's role is to provide a full continuum of service, always connected to employers.

Making sure that the demand is there is a balancing act. NoRTEC verifies demand on a continuous basis. LMI data is time sensitive and it is usually 18-24 months old, so the verification with employers has to be constant to make sure that demand has not shifted. NoRTEC holds periodic employer forums where employers talk about opportunities in employment or training. LMI data is used as a focal point of the event, and its validity is confirmed or corrected by employers' input. At the forums, employers talk about opportunities in employment or the kind of training needed.

The system of NoRTEC's employer engagement work has evolved beyond the verification of data and placing people in existing jobs. It has evolved to partnering with economic development, universities, community colleges, and employer groups to focus on the process of job and business creation. These conversations often include R&D and entrepreneurship, how this connection can drive business and job creation, and how NoRTEC

can support the workforce development implications of these efforts. But, in the absence of other conveners, NoRTEC has had to supplement their training and jobseeker support roles with a regional convener role, bringing parties together to focus on actions needed to drive job and business creation, which will ultimately drive the need for trained people.

NoRTEC has found that it is crucial to make a direct connection with employers and to understand their immediate needs, find ways to help them, and build trust in the process. For example, even though NoRTEC cannot provide funding, they can help employers think about how to make connections to banks, venture capitalists, and loan providers. Helping employers with their immediate needs builds support for the long-term.

Another example: three years ago NoRTEC worked on an Information Technology project. Employers told the universities that the students were not exiting with the knowledge and skills that they needed. The Dean of the I.T. Department at Chico State University spent months working on a plan but realized it would take four years to implement. The employer group was disappointed and nearly lost hope. NoRTEC tried to figure out if there was a different way that they could get an education class started quickly, deciding to bring in a community college to meet the demand. While the first class didn't work out too well, the second class was better, and the third hit the mark. Employers were impressed that NoRTEC was responsive to their needs, made decisions quickly, and was persistent.

As a result of these experiences, NoRTEC can call on employers as partners. In applying for grants, applicants are often required to have matching resources, support, or letters of commitment from employer groups. Prior to 2007, when NoRTEC had deeply engaged employers about their needs, they could not have met those requirements; today, they are able to readily call on employers and ask them to support their initiatives.

private industry council of westmoreland-fayette, inc.

Greensburg, Pennsylvania

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In response to federal, state, and local governments' investment in the green economy and preliminary research on green occupational growth in Pennsylvania, the Private Industry Council has identified three major industries for training. The training consists of two distinct elements: training that focuses on soft skills, and training that focuses on industry specific vocational training. In order to meet the needs of the target population, personal and career counseling is provided by the case managers on an individual basis. The Private Industry Council also addresses barriers to employment by providing supportive services to program participants.



Sean Sypolt
ssypolt@privateindustrycouncil.com

PROMISING PRACTICES

GREEN ALLIANCE COUNCIL BRINGS TOGETHER WIDE ARRAY OF PARTNERS

Partnership Building, Employer Engagement & Policy Alignment

The Private Industry Council of Westmoreland-Fayette, Incorporated (PIC) has formed and sustained strong partnerships through the establishment of a Green Alliance Committee. The Green Alliance Committee includes elected officials, economic council members from a four-county area, local colleges, and industry partners from both large and small businesses. The Committee has provided an important discussion forum to bring partners together and to provide updates on grant activities, upcoming needs, resources, and opportunities.

This approach of engaging a broad array of partners in regular meetings has led to strong partnerships across organizations. Employers were brought in at the beginning of the grant and the grant deliverables were written with a goal of being as flexible and as responsive to employers as possible. PIC is focused on providing customized training for jobs that already exist, whether that training is to get new employees into entry-level positions or to upskill incumbent workers. Because employers find value in the training and in the network created through the Green Alliance Committee meetings, they have brought other employers to the table. At the beginning of the grant, there were eight companies involved with the Green Alliance Committee. There are now 40 companies involved. In the last quarter alone, the number of companies involved went from 24 to 40.

The value of the Green Alliance Committee is in the connections it makes in terms of sharing information and resources and the trust that it is developing between parties. Everyone stays on the same page in relation to the grant and can start to form policy strategies together. The Committee has strengthened ties between workforce, economic development, and education.

Furthermore, the Committee has provided a forum for practical problem solving. The Committee overcame a transportation barrier through its engagement of local officials. PIC encountered a challenge when operating in rural areas where training participants did not have transportation available to get to training centers. PIC worked with local county officials who then worked with the transportation department to provide park and ride services and drop-off points for companies to pick up the participants.

PIC has found that one of the keys to engaging new partners is to publicize and tell stories about successful existing partnerships.

STRONG PROGRAM ADVERTISEMENT DRIVES RECRUITMENT

Partnership Building & Leveraging Resources

Much of PIC's training takes place in a rural environment, which has created a challenge for recruitment. PIC and its partners are aggressively addressing this challenge through strong advertising efforts. In the first quarter of the grant, they used billboards, newspaper ads, and even yard signs to advertise the program. They also attended job fairs and worked with other organizations serving a population that might have an interest in the training. They've also aligned program outreach with local community events and have engaged local officials in promoting the training. PIC has also connected responsibility to place, making staff accountable for a specific geographic area, which keeps the outreach targeted.

This approach has been a shift from past outreach efforts, which were conducted primarily through the local One-Stop. Now only about 25 percent of their participants come from the One-Stop. Broadening their outreach efforts, and including some non-traditional elements, has really made a difference in the number of participants served. Last quarter the number of participants increased from 186 to 308. It has also meant reaching people earlier in the cycle.

This recruitment effort has mostly involved legwork, but not increased funding, making it an effective tool for reaching new participants.

ENGAGING EMPLOYERS IN DECISION MAKING KEEPS TRAINING CUSTOMIZED AND FOCUSED

Employer Engagement

PIC's job training is driven by a mission to train individuals for jobs that exist. This means getting information from businesses on what jobs they have open, what specific skills and credentials they're looking for, and where future industry growth will be. Employers provide some of the information through their participation in the Green Alliance Committee, but PIC makes additional efforts to engage employers. They make visits to employers' sites, go to job fairs, have had employers speak at job clubs, and hosted an Energy Summit to grow and sustain the network of partners.

PIC engages employers in developing curriculum; this has included the development of a certificate that is applicable to a variety of employers in the region. In many cases, PIC will customize training to address specific employer needs. In one case, PIC helped companies leverage WIA funding to provide additional training to incumbent workers. By providing this training and creating a career ladder for the training employees need to advance, the companies were able to move incumbent workers along this career path and then hire additional employees.

Many of PIC's participants are under-employed or have failed to pass a company's skill-set screening evaluation. Employers refer these individuals to PIC, and PIC provides them with the necessary training to qualify for the position. PIC has worked with the plumber and pipefitters union to add curriculum to their apprenticeship program that prepares plumbers and pipefitters to work on green buildings.

In cases where PIC is not able to provide training that directly meets an employer's need, they are often able to connect the employer to a partner who can. The important piece is meeting with each individual partner to assess their unique needs and resources. In the case of one local solar manufacturing company, the company needed an entry level training curriculum that was then developed by another partner to meet that need. PIC, through the Pathways grant, brought them together.

TIGHT NETWORK OF EMPLOYERS ATTRACTS NEW COMPANIES TO PARTNERSHIP AND POTENTIALLY TO REGION

Employer Engagement, Partnership Building & Alignment with Economic Development

PIC's work and the Green Alliance Committee have spurred a common network of vendors and sub-vendors within the energy efficiency sector. The network continues to grow as companies recruit other companies and as the sector's success spreads by word of mouth. The Green Alliance Committee has led to local companies creating market relationships with other local companies, rather than going out of state for their supply chain, which is leading to the growth of an industry cluster. Companies from out of state have started to visit to consider locating in the area to be close to this strong network of companies in the energy efficiency sector.

PARTNERSHIPS FACILITATE PLACEMENT OF EX- OFFENDERS

Continuum of Participant Support

PIC's relationship with both the county and a group of local companies has led to successful placement of ex-offenders. Ex-offenders are referred to the training program and are assessed. Once PIC has completed an assessment of what bracket of training level the ex-offenders would fall into, there is a group of four or five companies that will hire the ex-offenders and use that pool of participants for training. PIC includes linkages with other support services and other social programs that are available at the county level. The training and placement of ex-offenders is an ongoing topic at the Green Alliance Committee meetings in order to assess the expectations of companies and other partners and to discuss how to better assist ex-offenders in becoming productive members of the community.

All participants in the program meet biweekly with a case manager who works with trainees so that they are able to more clearly express their abilities to employers. PIC has also seen this open dialogue with a case manager to be a way of building the employee's trust in the employer and generating a successful employer-employee relationship.

southwest housing solutions

Detroit, Michigan

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Southwest Housing Solutions (SWHS) is a nonprofit housing entity of Southwest Solutions. SWHS was established in 1996 with the goal of revitalizing the southwest Detroit community through strategic planning, development and management of affordable housing and commercial property. SWHS provides housing to low and moderate-income residents, advocates for cultural development through mixed-use projects, and implements neighborhood preservation initiatives. Additionally, SWHS provides services through its Housing Opportunity Center for homebuyers and foreclosure prevention.

Through the Pathways Out of Poverty grant, SWHS provides three training programs including weatherization/deconstruction, landscaping/forestry, and urban agriculture through a program called Detroit GreenWorks Solutions. Each training program is designed to prepare individuals for a specific career in industries such as, weatherization, construction, deconstruction, horticulture, landscaping and urban farming. The target populations for efforts associated with this grant include veterans, those with a criminal record, high school dropouts and other unemployed individuals.



Linda West
lwest@swsol.org

PROMISING PRACTICES

CONNECTING WITH THE RIGHT TRAINING PARTNERS AND CONTENT EXPERTS

Partnership Building & Employer Engagement

SWHS believes every entity should work within the range of services they provide best. For example, community organizations, such as SWHS, are effective in recruiting, screening, and placing individuals, but do not necessarily have proficiency in directly providing training in weatherization, landscaping, and urban agriculture. For this reason, collaboration with the best training partners and 'content experts' – those who have in-depth comprehension of a field or industry - is pivotal to obtain specific industry knowledge in addition to connections to industry resources and employers. There are community colleges and organizations around the country where workforce development is a main focus. This attribute and other factors should be considered when scoping out a community college or a content expert to serve as a partner in a grant program like SWHS's Detroit GreenWorks Solutions:

1. How long has the organization been in the community?
2. What are the placement rates and retention rates of the community college?
3. What kind of certifications does the organization provide and what is their track record with graduates owning those certifications?
4. How flexible is the organization in adapting to changes in curriculum, program needs, etc.?
5. What kind of businesses and employers does the organization work with?

Community organizations should partner with organizations based on the answers to these questions. Long-standing presence in a community, measureable success in retention and placement, and reputedly certified graduates prove the quality of the institution. Organizations that are flexible and have valuable connections to employers will be easy to work with and contribute resources beyond their immediate specialties.

Using these criteria, SWHS was able to identify quality partners who they could trust wholly with determining training content and curriculum. For the weatherization division of their Pathways Out of Poverty grant program, SWHS partnered with Henry Ford Community College (HFCC) and the WARM Training Center – a non-profit providing expertise in energy efficiency, green building and sustainability. These partners were responsible for influencing the curriculum and establishing a career pathway for individuals recruited by SWHS for the weatherization program. Involving high caliber partners at the inception of the program is in alignment with SWHS's theory of "starting with the end in mind." SWHS wanted to provide its trainees with relevant training that would also serve as a springboard to continued education and a clear career pathway. Working with HFCC and the WARM Training Center from the start gave SWHS the resources to meet that goal by crafting the appropriate curriculum and creating programs like their Energy Auditor course that awards students college credit and a path towards certification as an Energy Auditor.

EMPLOYER ADVISORY COUNCILS AND WEEKLY PROGRAM MEETINGS FOR PARTNERS: KEEPING PARTNERS ENGAGED

Employer Engagement & Partnership Building

SWHS has separate employer advisory committees for each of their grant program divisions – weatherization and landscaping. Employer engagement heavily relies on the employer networks of the community college and partners. This is another reason it is vital to choose well connected partners. Employers convene once a month to talk about jobs, Labor Market Information (LMI), and receive updates on cohorts of graduating students from the training program. An important factor in attracting employers is that meetings are mutually beneficial for the employers and the partners. For example, SWHS plans to feature Enterprise Detroit as a guest speaker to share information about loans programs for contractors at their weatherization employer meeting. Current employer advisors serve as great resources for providing information on current employment needs and for recruiting new businesses to join the committee once they find how beneficial meetings can be. SWHS

continues to engage employers throughout the training process and invites them as keynote speakers at training graduation ceremonies.

Weekly meetings between all program partners build an integrated approach to expanding the capacity of each partner's role in spurring green job growth. Meeting participants include lead instructors from training partners, case managers, job development specialists, and program administrators and outreach coordinators. During meetings, partners discuss issues with individual students, curriculum revisions, requests for additional academic support, grant requirements, administrative issues and recruitment, job possibilities, job placement and successes. Gathering all the partners on a regular basis ensures that each participant is getting the support they need and all deficiencies are being addressed in a collaborative manner.

A SUCCESS STORY OF EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Employer Engagement & Partnership Building

To supplement their network of employers, SWHS also seeks out collaborative efforts like the Detroit Regional Fund for Workforce Development (Detroit Fund). This effort, managed by the local United Way, congregates a group of non-profits, including SWHS to assist green-trained residents in Detroit. Working with the Detroit Fund helped connect SWHS with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) where an immediate need for employees in weatherization at MDOT was revealed. This workforce need coincided with a graduating cohort from the weatherization training program. Seven students from the program were placed as a result of this partnership. Because of the comprehensive training curriculum and certifications provided by the program, MDOT was extremely pleased with the quality of workers. MDOT even mentioned that SWHS graduates outperformed incumbent employees.

SCREENING FOR SUCCESS

In order to promote high success rates among program participants, SWHS has implemented specific standards and a comprehensive screening process for candidates to ensure only those who are qualified and motivated will be accepted. They require steps such as a pre-application, attendance at an informational orientation, drug testing, a physical examination, the WorkKeys assessment, two interviews, and continued evaluation throughout the training program.

Following the pre-application process, orientations are hosted by case managers and outreach/marketing specialists who present detailed information on the training program expectations, required assessments and available support services. Orientations help to ensure students understand the training areas and serves as a filter for students who are not interested in pursuing careers for which the training programs are targeted. SWHS arranges for potential participants to get a physical prior to acceptance to ensure they are physically capable of completing basic actions required by the occupation for which they are training. Attendance is an important part of class and participants can only miss a set number of classes (a total of 5 in a 12 week class) to remain enrolled in the program. Each component of the screening process increases the probability that enrolled students will complete training successfully and become prime candidates for employment.

KICK-OFF MARKETING EVENT

Partnership Building & Continuum of Participant Support

In June 2010, SWHS hosted a marketing event targeted at attracting new employers as well as recruiting students for the training program and promoting the program in the community. The event was planned collaboratively between the training partners (HFCC, WARM Training Center and Greening Detroit). Each partner was responsible for creating a list of employers to invite. To reach members of the community, postcards were sent, advertising was done at other events, and flyers were distributed.

The event was split into two sessions, one in the morning

for employers and VIPs and one in the afternoon for the community and potential program participants. In total, 47 employers and 163 residents attended. The employer session featured kiosks with demonstrations of the training program and the opportunity to meet with the program instructors. Student representatives from each training program spoke and a slide show presentation demonstrated what classroom training is like. As a result of the employer session, several contacts for potential employer advisory committee participants and job placement leads were made. For the afternoon session, residents visited stations for program intake. Sixty-six attendees went through the intake process at the event. Riding on the success of the first event, a second event was held in January of this year.

CUSTOMIZED SUPPORT FOR TRAINEES

Continuum of Participant Support

After qualified candidates are accepted, SWHS educates students about support resources at their disposal. Support programs include tutoring and assistance with interview skills and resume writing, development of individual employment plans and goals, and how to overcome any barriers to meet those goals. In addition to these resources, students are awarded training certificates in First Aid, CPR, lead and asbestos awareness, and the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) safety standards. These certifications were selected based on recommendations from the business advisory council and demonstrate another example of how employer participation divulges valuable information for shaping successful training programs.

SWHS runs an adult learning lab that students attend to bring their literacy skills up to par, complete their GEDs or learn computer literacy skills. The adult learning lab was established in January 2011. It is fully integrated with the Pathways Out of Poverty program and is conveniently located in Southwest Detroit. The lab is paid for partly by the grant funding and operational costs are separate. Pathways Out of Poverty participants benefit from the Adult Learning Lab in multiple ways. Each week, members of both the weatherization and the landscaping cohorts spend four hours of their training time at the

Learning Lab. Half of the time is designated for workforce coaching. The other half is dedicated to math tutoring. The class time is divided between group and individual instruction. During group instruction, the curriculum includes resume writing, how to interview and other soft skills as well as contextual math and English correlated directly with their training. During individual instruction, Pathways case managers, job developer, and the Center for Working Families financial coach go to the Learning Lab to meet with participants and work on breaking down barriers, creating job plans and developing budgets. Having an instructional site dedicated to this instruction and one on one work is a great asset to the Pathways participants.

Having their own lab allows greater flexibility in multiple ways. First, classes can be scheduled conveniently for adults with other time conflicts. The lab is at an easily accessible location to help those without private transportation means. Additionally, the coursework targets the skills needed for employment in industry areas relevant to the grant program. The kind of knowledge acquired in SWHS courses differs from that of a general community college course, where the goal is to educate students to pass a placement exam rather than succeed in a specific occupation. Contextualized reading and math are included in the weatherization classroom training. These contextualized lessons help students brush up on their reading and math skills in ways that are relevant to weatherization. For example, students learn how to calculate areas and “R” values. Learning takes place in the classroom, as well as on sites where students get hands-on experience. The contextualized course curricula were developed by HFCC.

ENERGY AUDITOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Partnership Building & Continuum of Participant Support

The grant program includes scholarships provided by HFCC for an Energy Auditor course. Students apply for scholarships to attend courses and are evaluated based on criteria jointly created by SWHS and HFCC – a result of continued communication and cooperation between partners. Applicants are evaluated by their instructors and counselors based on growth in comprehension and ability to perform. To date, scholarship students from five cohorts, totaling 13 students, have completed the scholarship courses. Eight of those students went on to pass the tough Building Performance Institute exam which certifies them as professional Energy Auditors. Six students from two cohorts are currently enrolled in the spring semester. By completing the Energy Auditor scholarship program students also receive three college credits. Additionally, all students that complete the training programs for weatherization receive one college credit. Awarding college credit creates a pathway to furthering education at the community college.

PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS

Leveraging Resources, Partnership Building & Continuum of Participant Support

SWHS also provides services to veterans in Detroit through the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) which began in July 2010. Fifty-nine veterans have been served through the program with 35 who have completed training and ten employed. SWHS runs a 150-unit apartment project called Piquette Square, which provides housing and comprehensive support services for veterans. Managing Piquette Square has fostered interaction and connections with diverse group of veterans' service providers and donation partners. SWHS uses the Piquette Square facility and homeless shelters visits to recruit candidates for the HVRP program. The same outreach and intake procedures, including an orientation, used for the Pathways grant are implemented to successfully recruit veterans.

SWHS leverages resources from both the Pathways grant and HVRP efforts to amplify impact of each program's services. Both programs are housed in the Center for Working Families at SWHS and there is meaningful overlap between the two programs. For example, SWHS has one case manager who splits time between the two grant programs and certain services like coaching are available to customers of both grant programs. The job developers for HVRP and Pathways work together to identify, recruit and engage employers and place successful participants in jobs. Creating bridges between the two programs and sharing resources offers a greater range of services to customers and increases the ability to provide those services.



**OVERVIEW OF PROCESS TO ENROLL CANDIDATE INTO
DETROIT GREENWORKS SOLUTIONS JOB TRAINING PROGRAM:**

1. Candidates complete Pre-Application to determine eligibility to participate.

Candidates can do this via:
 - Online Pre-Application (www.dgws.org)
 - Filling out Pre-Application at our office
 - Calling office – complete Pre-Application over the phone
2. Intake Specialist contact candidate to:
 - Determine which program they want to take (Weatherization/Deconstruction or Landscaping / Forestry)
 - Set client up to attend next orientation for given training
 - Provide a list of documents we need them to bring with them to the orientation
3. Reminder calls to all candidates who RSVPed to orientation the day prior
4. Orientation Day (Detailed on next page)
5. Prior to starting class candidates must take a drug test, physical, Human Perform Exam (replicates movements they will do on the job), and WorkKeys assessment. All results are sent to the Intake Specialist.
6. Once the Intake Specialist receives a negative drug test, the candidate's file will be given to the Case Manager. The Case Manager sets up a pre-interview to complete a needs assessment, Individuals Action Plan, and provide information on the program start date (if candidate is ready for training).
7. Reminder calls are made before the start of class to all candidates who were accepted into the job training program.



ORIENTATION AGENDA

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Explain the Training Program
- Explain Supportive Services
- Explain Assessment Process

1. BEFORE ORIENTATION STARTS

- Get clients ID, Soc Sec Card, Proof of Income and Residency
- Mark the date we received these documents on the front of folder and place into folder
- Put client's name on folder [Last, First]
- Explain paperwork to client, have them start filling it out
- We make copies while clients are completing paperwork

2. WELCOME

- What is Detroit GreenWorks Solutions
 - ARRA Pathways Out of Poverty Grant for \$4million in green job training
 - Collaboration with SWSol, HFCC, WARM, Greening of Detroit, DWDD
 - Talk about how green jobs are real jobs
- Purpose of today
 - Learn all about the training
 - Learn about our supportive services
 - Next steps before starting program
- Goal is full time employment
 - What you put in is what you get out of this training

3. INTRODUCTIONS

- All clients introduce themselves and how they learned about the program

4. THE TRAINING PROGRAM

- WARM and HFCC are the training partners
- Class is Mon – Fri 8am to 4:30pm
- Location: 2715 Bagley (corner of St. Anne's and Bagley)
- WARM:
 - Classroom and hands on training
- HFCC's certifications
 - First Aid
 - CPR
 - Lead and asbestos awareness
 - MIOSHA safety
- 1 college credit if successfully complete all certifications
- Top 15 students each year can get advanced college degree in Weatherization Specialist and Alternative Energies
- Students also get steel toe boots and tools

5. SUPPORT SERVICES

- Handing off the baton
 - Libbie & Joe = Intake and Orientation
 - Mac = Income supports and access to benefits
 - * Individual Action Plan (needs assessment)
 - Libbie = Workforce Development
 - * Works with trainees throughout program to remove barriers which may prevent completion of program or employment
 - * Interview skills
 - * Mock interview
 - * Resume support
 - José = Business Services Representative
 - * Individual Employment Plan (employment goals)
 - * Helps connect trainees w/ employers
 - Learning Lab
 - * ABE, ESL, GED support

6. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- Clients must bring Concentra and WorkKeys referral sheets and ID, so they don't have to pay for assessments, and we get the results.
- Concentra
 - Must go within 2 days of orientation
 - Can go to any Concentra, at any time (map and schedule on back of paper)
 - Will take: drug test, physical, Human Performance Exam
- WorkKeys
 - Test is only offered Mon – Thurs, at 9am or 1:30pm @ 707 Milwaukee
 - Must show up before testing starts
 - Test takes 3 hours
 - Please call us after taking test to let us know

7. AFTER ORIENTATION

- Return all documents to clients
- Double check that all forms are completed correctly
- Authorize the Concentra form
 - Ask when they are going to be able to take drug test

After candidates leave:

- Enter their data into Efforts To Outcomes (on-line database for Center for Working Families to keep track of their progress)
- Add client to Google document shared between staff to keep track of current students
- Perform background check on all candidates
- File away candidates folder



the workplace, inc.

Bridgeport, Connecticut

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



Until the 1960's, Bridgeport, Connecticut enjoyed the national reputation as a city that made things. The onset of deindustrialization in Bridgeport resulted in the city suffering significant consequences. In 2009, Bridgeport Public Use Micro data Area (PUMA) was 02400 and had a poverty rate of 20 percent. Bridgeport is the largest city in the state and the poorest of the 20 communities in Southwest Connecticut. It has the lowest median household income at \$35,736; the highest percentage of individuals living in poverty; the highest unemployment rate; and the highest percentage of individuals with less than a high school education.

Connecticut's Regional Workforce Investment Board, manages Green-Up Bridgeport that serves urban neighborhoods in the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Green-Up Bridgeport serves residents in neighborhoods of the city that have poverty rates of 15 percent or greater and face other challenges including high school drop-outs, criminal records, unemployment and other significant disadvantages. Green-Up Bridgeport is a skilled trade training program that is not targeted to any one industry, but instead is training people in occupations that have an increased demand across a range of industries. Green-Up Bridgeport facilitates training in energy efficiency career tracks within four core categories; Building Energy Systems, Construction, Resource Management and Transportation. Upon enrollment, the participant's first activity is to attend the Green Survey 101, a four week course. The survey course focuses on energy efficiency career exploration and provides participants the opportunity to examine information about the careers that exist within each category, while obtaining in-depth details regarding credentialing, career ladders, and wage information. The four week class is held at the University of Bridgeport, which gives participants the opportunity to be on a college campus. Following Survey 101, The Green-Up Program participants are afforded the opportunity to enroll into a training program of interest which results in a State or nationally recognized certificate or credential. The Green-Up Bridgeport process integrates work-based learning with vocational and academic skills training. Related academics (contextual learning), industry-focused job readiness, employability skills, career development, life skills training, and on-the-job training are all part of the program's "Platform of Readiness" approach. This training approach will be successful in providing the skills and support needed to move people out of poverty and into sustainable, family-supporting careers.



Olga Coleman-Williams
ocolman-williams@workplace.org,

PROMISING PRACTICES

ENGAGING EMPLOYERS FROM START TO FINISH

Employer Engagement

Workplace Inc. is a Regional Workforce Investment Board (WIB) located in Southwestern Connecticut. Prior to the economic downturn, Workplace Inc. never struggled with placing jobseekers. The WIB was able to use short, industry focused certificates, and get jobseekers placed in employment. That reality no longer holds true for many participants. To gain the attention of employers, Workplace Inc. reaches out to employers and holds individual conversations with each of them starting out by asking them what they can learn from the employer and then learning more about their specific skill needs. This approach has allowed Workplace Inc. to form relationships where they can go back and make placement requests. One strategy the WIB uses to reach out to employers is to find out what jobs posted on Monster.com fall within their training focus. The WIB contacts the employer to confirm needs, explains the program, and asks for feedback on curriculum during a one-on-one session to ensure that they are able to deliver the kind of employees with the skills the employer needs.

To keep ongoing employer engagement, Workplace Inc. firmly believes that they must offer the employer something, rather than just asking them for something. Workplace Inc. uses a variety of methods to strengthen relationships with employers including asking employers to send job announcements directly to them, holding forums to inform employers about opportunities for incumbent worker training programs, offering to provide a trainer on-site to determine special skills needed that can then be turned into a course at no cost to the employer, and extending invitations to employers about upcoming events and opportunities of interest (i.e. private grant writer services for employers who may be interested in applying for a grant but do not have a grant writer on staff).

Another way Workplace Inc. is creating relationships with employers is through recruiting firms. Recruiting firms give participants opportunities for job experience and the employer increased confidence in hiring someone who has already been vetted and has some experience. The recruiting firms' understanding of industry requirements builds employer trust that benefits the WIB as well. In addition, recruiting firms save employers time and money by doing much of the upfront testing, interviews, and providing work equipment i.e. hardhats, boots, etc.

STAY INFORMED – SPEAK TO EMPLOYERS AND TRAINING PARTICIPANTS, UTILIZE LMI DATA

Data-Driven Decision Making

Discussions with industry representatives led to the realization that employers want jobseekers with several certificates. This in turn shaped how the WIB built the Green-Up Bridgeport program. Additional conversations with employers and educational firms also influenced course components within the program. For example, the program changed its original content from including a ten hour OSHA training to including the higher demanded OSHA 40 hour training instead, increasing the course from two weeks to eight weeks.

The WIB receives information from many different sources starting by maximizing its internal resources. Workplace Inc. utilizes the in-house LMI Office to receive “hot off the press” reports directly. The WIB has been able to gain current information and data from DOL sponsored conferences such as a recent Regional Conference. Workplace Inc. also leverages information from other grants that they have received. For example, they are using a Wal-Mart grant to provide additional data on green jobs. The WIB receives valuable information from participants about job skill and support needs once placed on the job. Workplace Inc. uses what they learn from these groups to refine or revamp curriculum, processes, and systems of support.

Workplace Inc. is listening to employers, participants, and other data sources and learning from the advice and information. They now view themselves as managing regular business practices in an innovative way, using the grant as an opportunity to create an innovation lab.

ADAPTING PROGRAMS TO BETTER SUIT PARTICIPANTS' NEEDS

Continuum Of Participant Support



Workplace Inc. found that a large portion of the population they recruit for training is not equipped for their training and need remedial courses. As an industry, weatherization and construction require some math and science. So the program has increased their partnerships with adult and basic education providers, and has begun to tighten recruitment to reduce attrition during the training program. For example, Workplace Inc. is now recruiting from career and technical education programs. These individuals are still in school, their math skills are up-to-date, and they still meet the grant requirements.

The program's curriculum has also changed to better meet needs of participants. The program includes a four week entry Survey "101" course which covers four different green areas. Participants can choose related training from one of those four areas once they have a better sense of what a "green job" is all about. The WIB has changed the timing of its courses to reduce dropout. They found that there was a gap between the end of the entry level Survey course and the start of another course, which resulted in some dropouts. The program now has staggered courses in addition to providing a customer service course recommended by employers to keep participants engaged and involved.

By sitting down and reviewing sub-contracts with Green-Up Bridgeport case management and training providers, the WIB is able to educate these provider partners on program measures and outcomes. All sub-contracts have performance benchmarks which provide the opportunity for partners to understand how critical their role is in helping to ensure the success of the participant. Partners also engage in group discussion to share best practices on areas that are consistent in each sub-contract such as placement and retention strategies. This increased connection between partners has resulted in greater provider control in meeting participant needs and program goals. Providers are now thinking of new ways to get people enrolled into training and ways to help them complete the courses. Since providers are often frontline contact with participants, they hear first-hand the needs of participants. For example, when a provider learns that a participant is having issues with transportation and on the brink of dropping out of the program this issue is easily solved with a bus pass. Increased communication with partners has helped all see the greater goals of the program as a team.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS – SOAR, EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Partnership Building

In Connecticut, the community colleges are part of the SOAR (Sustainable Operations: Alternative and Renewable) Energy Initiative, which is funded by a U.S. DOL Community Based Job Training grant. SOAR



has created eight certificate programs. Each of these programs have developed curriculum for use. Workplace Inc. has been using the Alternative Energy Transportation Technology Certificate program as a viable training program for Green Up participants. One challenge Green-Up Bridgeport continues to try and work through with the colleges is the fact that the SOAR program operates on the traditional community college semester system, while Green-Up Bridgeport operates on a faster timeline with a constant enrollment process.

Workplace Inc. has also created a strategic partnership with Eastern Connecticut State University and its Institute for Sustainable Energy Department to create the curriculum for the Survey course components. The WIB specifically targeted the University because of the green expertise and knowledge of its Director, Bill Leahy, who is a recognized state leader in regards to sustainability.

To build program case managers' understanding of green, the WIB holds a green learning academy every month that lasts between a half day and two days. Some specific areas of discussion include defining green, how to use and teach participants to use career resources such as O*NET, inputting data into the RAD system, trends in employment, Survey "101" course overview, making participants aware of assistance beyond supportive services i.e. WIC, etc., and how to provide participants with educational and career guidance.

SHARED VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Policy Alignment

Workplace Inc. works closely with its partners to align operational strategies across agencies to get to shared vision and accountability by all. The WIB expects all partners to focus on job placement and is holding its training providers responsible in this area as well. Partner contract terms have been changed to include percentage placement targets. The WIB expects that training providers and case managers should be ready to "stand behind their product and services" and the results of the product or service should lead toward successful participant employment. The WIB also expects providers to come to the table with their own employer relationships that each partner can leverage.



DEVELOPING SKILL SETS AT HOME

Leveraging Resources

The City of Bridgeport donated a house to Workplace Inc. so that program participants gain actual hands on experience and use it to fine tune their skills, making them more marketable to employers. This donation gives participants an opportunity practice job related skills acquired during the training program. These skills include general carpentry with the reconstruction of the house's front porch step; lead abatement removal and appropriate encapsulation activities; weatherization and conservation measures; and insulation and air sealing. At the end of the grant, the City will take the house back and sell it. The University of Bridgeport also gave the program in-kind space to use for training, giving participants a great sense of college life.

ADVICE TO OTHERS

Workplace Inc. believes that reaching out to employers was the best thing they ever did, specifically coming with the attitude of "we want to learn from you." They also recommend that grantees "go with the flow", be creative, and work with the transitions, even though it may feel counterintuitive, as this work is constantly changing.

west hills community college district

Coalinga, California

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

West Hills Community College District, comprised of two community colleges and two satellite sites, works with various city and county agencies including the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and local and potential employers to effectively recruit, train and place individuals into growing industries in the region. West Hills works closely with Westside Institute of Technology, a partner organization, who has formed relationships with the surrounding school districts to provide the vocational training for the college district. West Hills utilizes vocational ARRA grant funds to modify and expand training curriculum allowing them to place more individuals in green employment in the short term but also strengthening their training system structure in the long term. By successfully placing numerous individuals into green employment, West Hills has strengthened the community and the economy of this region of rural Central California.

Through the Pathways Out of Poverty grant, West Hills recruits rural disadvantaged adults and provides an array of supportive services including pre-training assessments, pre-employment workshops, GED training and applied basic skills remediation to prepare participants for local green employment opportunities. Through a Green Technology curriculum, the grantee trains participants for the regional training needs in solar farming, food processing, agricultural manufacturing, energy efficient construction and remodeling, and water conservation. In addition to providing accessible training opportunities, the initiative meets the bilingual needs of program participants by offering Spanish-speaking recruiters, and bilingual education and training resources.



Cathy Barabe
cathybarabe@whccd.edu

PROMISING PRACTICES

GETTING THE WIB ON YOUR SIDE

Partnership Building

With the help of successful partnerships, West Hills has effectively placed a large number of community members into green occupations. One partnership that has been critical to the success of this grant and others is West Hills' relationship with their WIB. West Hills has been working closely with their local WIB for over ten years. The WIB assists West Hills by identifying individuals to come to training sessions, staffing One-Stops, offering case management support and pre-employment training and fostering employer connections. This has directly increased the number of participants West Hills has been able to serve over the grant period.

Forming a strong relationship with the WIB was not an easy task. To establish this link, West Hills' staff members went to their local WIB and explained to the WIB manager why they were interested in being a training provider. Despite friendly skepticism, the WIB manager allowed West Hills to present their case to the greater board. When the next RFA (Request For Application) came out, West Hills applied to be a service provider and with the initial contact already made, West Hills was given a small contract to train a handful of individuals. While joining these two large organizations was similar to rubbing a square peg into a round hole, once the connection was made and trust was built, both entities benefited. West Hills has been able to produce graduates with transferrable skill sets who have quickly entered the region's workforce, reflecting positively on the WIB. Over this partnership, the WIB has rewritten their internal RFA to broaden West Hills' training jurisdiction resulting in more functional workforce training programs.

As a subcontractor of the WIB, West Hills' staff is located at the One-Stops to provide recruitment, assessment and case management services to all grant participants. Additionally, instructors in the participating colleges work closely with One-Stop case managers to provide regular updates to ensure appropriate support services are offered to students. This gives trainees the guidance and support they need to be successful in the training program. One-Stop staff members also work on the

various campuses, making them more accessible to the students. The WIBs, participating colleges and One-Stop staff members have joint meetings where information on recruitment practices and training support is shared freely. Through frequent, open conversation, these organizations have recognized overlap and streamlined processes, allowing them to leverage resources more efficiently.

By creating clear roles and clarifying the strengths of each partner organization, West Hills has been able to create a single line from recruitment, training and employment. Recently David Castillo, Director of Westside Institute of Technology (the vocational training arm of the college district), worked with a solar employer in the community. This company opened a second solar farm 70 miles south of the original site and, due to the success in placing trainees at the previous site, decided to work exclusively with the Westside Institute again. David realized that he could not serve the employer's needs on his own, so he asked for the help of another college staff member who was in charge of instructional programs and a WIB coworker. Together they put together a training program to supply this employer with the necessary workforce to successfully expand his business. This included developing solar vocational curriculum in this area that directly supported the training program that David was setting up. These three entities came together in one effort to build employer trust and develop an efficient system from training to employment. Having a strong network of partners provides opportunities for other agencies to step in when large requests arise.

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE NETWORK, BEING PROACTIVE AND BRIDGING THE GAP

Employer Engagement

West Hills has formed mutually beneficial relationships with organizations and agencies by proactively seeking partners in their immediate and surrounding communities. These agencies refer eligible participants to West Hills' vocational training programs, allowing them to place a greater number of trainees into green jobs.

West Hills is a part of a large collaborative base of established organizations including local municipalities, county agencies and the EDC who convene once a month and provide the necessary workforce and resources for employers. This integrated system gives new and existing employers the confidence to locate or develop in the region. For example TomaTek, a tomato processor company, expanded three times in the region and will be expanding again this summer requiring an additional 400 employees. The partnership pulled together funds and resources to provide this thriving company with the necessary workforce. Additionally, as a largely rural and poor California region, the Central Valley was often not on the radar of employers. But recently, two international employers including Eurus Energy America have contracted to build their solar farms in Fresno County. The EDC credits the supportive network of West Hills and the WIB for putting the Central Valley on the international map.

By being proactive and persistent, West Hills has made successful contacts with new employers. Once West Hills finds out that a prospective employer has spoken with the city or county, a staff member follows up right away with a call or an in person visit to inform the employer of their training program and of the community benefits: available workforce, land, accessibility to transportation, central regional approach. At times new employers can be skeptical of working with a training provider, believing the training entity is out to make a profit. West Hills works at the ground floor to reassure the employer that they are there to partner and help the employer succeed. Solar farm proposals go through the county for an environmental impact report and just with a quick conversation with the county staff, West Hills can find out which applications are in place, follow up with the employers (who they may have already formed a relationship with) and figure out the progress and the timelines for the upcoming project.

People in business typically know the employers in their field. West Hills has found it helpful to approach employers in a team of two, one person who has a relationship with the employer and one person who does not. This is easier than a cold call or visit, and employers

are more willing to accept the new partnership when it is associated with a relationship they have already formed. When West Hills trained participants for a job in Mendota and a business in Coalinga was considering working with West Hills, the two employers already knew each other from working in the same industry field for many years. West Hills asked the first employer from Mendota to go to a quick meeting with the second employer to help foster the new relationship and build a bridge of trust. West Hills provides valuable services to the Mendota employer, so they were willing to help connect the grantee to another employer in the industry.

West Hills seeks out employers, discovers their needs, and adapts their programs to make their businesses successful. In this way, they are able to successfully place students into jobs at the end of their training. West Hills follows up with employers after they have hired their trainees and discusses how they can improve their program. By prescreening employees and identifying skill set needs, West Hills is able to design an effective training and placement program. Employers now seek out West Hills for prescreened employees.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Continuum of Participant Support

The 60 mile drive to West Hills' training sites has been a disincentive for rural residents to attend classes, so West Hills has worked directly with surrounding cities and school districts to bring training directly to these regions. Partnerships West Hills has formed with local K-12 school districts have given them the ability to use school facilities at no cost in these rural areas, which often do not have training centers accessible. These training services provide rural residents with an opportunity to improve their skills, career options and marketability. West Hills now has the capability and portability to train more individuals and to reach a broader range of employers. New staff was hired and trained to serve as WIA support in each rural community to assist participants with basic skills remediation, computer literacy, enrollment into vocational training and job placement. These staff members serve as liaisons between the rural city and West Hills.

In addition to expanding their training range, West Hills offers students a variety of supportive services to ensure that they succeed in their training program and to prepare them for employment. This includes providing students with equipment such as work boots, hardhats, gloves, safety vest, and safety glasses, as well as interview and resume writing skills. A majority of West Hills' students are seasonal workers who are seeking an opportunity to enter full-time employment. City partners are supplying real world projects and materials using a first source hiring format in order to help the residents of their communities obtain local jobs.

KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY *Continuum of Participant Support*

Developing training programs is an evolving process and should reflect the needs of the community base. Due to the demography of the region, many potential training participants are Limited English speakers. West Hills uses bilingual recruiters and word of mouth to successfully reach these individuals. When offering a new class, West Hills e-mails fliers in both English and Spanish to over 200 people in various employment agencies, workforce and community organizations. These associations can easily print and post these fliers allowing West Hills to reach a broader audience. While many tools are available on the college website, the staff has come to realize that this cohort of individuals does not make use of these resources and are more effectively reached by word of mouth.

In addition, West Hills has placed numerous Limited English speakers in solar positions by tailoring training programs. Bilingual training instructors and aides, who are experts in the field, provide training and one on one technical translation assistance to trainees. One of the challenges West Hills came across was employers did not anticipate the need for administrators with Spanish speaking skills necessary to communicate with the majority of the trained individuals. Bilingual employees were able to move up the ladder quickly due to this lack of foresight.

To successfully place ex-offenders, West Hills makes the initial contact with the employer to determine what requirements these workers must meet before employment (drug tests, DMV printouts). By doing this, West Hills is able to make sure ex-offenders are prepared for the interview and screening process to the best of their ability. West Hills' staff also encourages participants to enter trade oriented fields such as solar, construction and welding as employers are more willing to hire ex-offenders in these sectors.

ALWAYS BE ONE STEP AHEAD *Changing Demand & Data-Driven Decision Making*

West Hills has two advisory committees (one for each region) made up of industry employers who they are in constant communication with and who help them build their training courses and target the correct industry skill-sets. The committees are broken into industry sectors to bring people with similar backgrounds together to discuss industry changes and workforce demand. From this relationship, West Hills is able to learn firsthand the skill sets employers are looking for and tailor their training programs to those needs. Additionally, West Hills is often able to leverage new equipment from technology advisory board employers who want their potential workforce to be familiar with this updated technology.

West Hills is constantly adapting their training programs to fit changing employer and industry needs. This is especially true when it comes to the ever changing nature of solar technologies including advances in solar panel design, nanotechnology applications and industry standards and the shifting requirements of new industry partners. For example, when West Hills helped train participants in Mendota, on the first solar site a basic structure took approximately four hours to construct but by the last site, the technology had advanced so quickly that it only took 45 minutes to build the same size structure. Each time West Hills trains participants for a new project they have to take into account the technology changes and the more efficient processes available.

To keep up to date with the changing industry, relationships and partnerships formed with employers and contractors come into play. Some contractors make a bigger push for technology and by speaking to them or visiting the work site before beginning training, West Hills is able to adjust their curriculum to fit these new technology advancements. The college has also met these challenges by hiring a professional consultant to work directly with manufacturers, attend solar technology conferences and vendor fairs to determine design systems that will best prepare students for jobs. Additionally, West Hills makes use of their WIB labor market surveys and the Employment Development Department (EDD) projections to keep informed of demand changes, but West Hills has discovered that the most effective way of keeping track of changing demand is by speaking to employers. No surveys predicted that central California would be the solar farm capital of the world, but West Hills was made aware of this shift by talking to employers.

The green energy industry is continuously changing, which means West Hills must adapt their curriculum to meet the needs of the evolving industry. There is a lot more to green energy than the end product. There are various occupations that need to be filled by trained

employees within the field of green energy including forklift operators, welders, and electricians. West Hills has learned more about green opportunities in their region by attending city and regional meetings. Knowing the dynamism of green in your region is key.

One of the challenges West Hills came across was the sheer size of the solar industry and the corresponding training courses they must provide. For a solar farm to run successfully a wide range of individuals have to be trained in fields such as electrical, residential wiring, welding and ground construction. West Hills broadened their core curriculum to account for the diversity of the solar industry and by doing so was able to provide trainees with transferrable skills that will allow them to succeed in numerous jobs in the community. This curriculum was adapted based off of the suggestions of the advisory committee. This committee was able to read between the lines and find commonalities among multiple job descriptions and in the end produce a valuable training course. The region has greatly benefitted from these individuals with hands on skills who have been able to take their skills immediately from training to employment.

workforce development council of seattle-king county

Seattle, Washington

SGA Type - Pathways Out of Poverty

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) of Seattle-King County is involved in three DOL green jobs training grants- the state's SESP, an Energy Training Partnership grant, and a Pathways out of Poverty Grant. This case study focuses on the Pathways Grant, though many of the partners involved in this grant are also involved in the other two.

The GreenLight Project concentrates on serving the poorest areas of southeast Seattle, connecting disadvantaged individuals to green-sector jobs. GreenLight includes short-term introduction courses to green construction and manufacturing jobs at South Seattle Community College's Georgetown campus, Seattle's preeminent training site for green skills in the trades. The project also provides training and certification in weatherization. Finally, participants have access to more in-depth training in the fields of deconstruction, green manufacturing, and green construction. GreenLight partners include South Seattle Community College, industry groups, labor unions, Seattle and King County housing authorities, community-service organizations, industry groups and environmental training organizations. The program plans to train 450 low-income people.



Marlena Sessions
msessions@seakingwdc.org

PROMISING PRACTICES

MANY PARTNERS SUPPORT A COMPLEX SYSTEM

Partnership Building

WDC relies on a complex variety of partners for Project GreenLight, 12 in total. They include:

1. **Case Management Agencies:** Neighborhood House, Pacific Associates, YWCA, Asian Counseling Referral Service
2. **Comprehensive partner** (case management, program management, internship) King County Work Training Program
3. **Training providers:**
 - **Asian Counseling Referral Service** (Green Building Maintenance)
 - **Seattle Vocational Institute/ Pre-Apprentice Construction Training** (construction)
 - **Clean Edison** (Deconstruction)
 - **South Seattle Community College** (Green Manufacturing, and SODO, Inc.)
 - **Got Green** (Weatherization)
4. **Community partners and labor:** Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle Jobs Initiative, Labor Council, AFL-CIO

The purpose of having so many partners was two-fold: to secure case management services that could be truly targeted either by geography or by specific population served, and to offer a variety of training programs within the GreenLight Project umbrella. The program specifically targets ex-offenders and veterans, and serves a large number of ESL speakers as well. Partners coordinate on recruitment activities and share insights and curriculum ideas across the various training programs. Many of the partners have worked together on prior projects, although including some additional new partners has allowed WDC to get to know some additional excellent resources in the community.

During the referral and recruitment phase, participants can select one of five training programs that best fit them in terms of eligibility requirements, personal preference, skill level, and timing. These are green building maintenance, green construction, deconstruction, green construction and weatherization.

Says Lee Newgent of the Seattle King County Building and Construction Trades Council:

The unions are proactively trying to increase diversity of our membership, and this grant is one way we can do that. Being a part of pre-apprenticeship programs is a smart move for us and the participants. We also work hard on project labor agreements that are clear and precise and help put our members to work. If we can figure out how to embrace and train for the changes in the trades with energy efficiency sector, that sets a precedent for how we can do it in the other sectors. It's a sustainability issue (viability) for us long term. We want to get this right. As it relates to green, we promote the Sustainability in the Building Trades DVD curriculum which gives trade apprenticeship programs in the state a foundation in green knowledge and practices. The curriculum is available nationwide as part of the Multi-Craft Core curriculum of the national Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO.

EFFECTIVELY LINKING GREEN JOBS AND CAREER PATHWAYS

Continuum of Participant Support

Due to South Seattle Community College's own sustainability/green related efforts and its long working relationship with WDC, the connection between Greenlight Project's training and the college's building sustainability career pathways is quite strong. While the degree pathways effort continues to be a long term investment and build out, the GreenLight Project benefits from the college's overall approach. Participants may in the future return to the college for additional educational opportunities that are directly related to the material covered in GreenLight Project's courses. The college's strategic vision valuing sustainability is reinforced in GreenLight Project courses. Couple this

emphasis with the college's deep experience in working with apprenticeship programs and labor unions, and the GreenLight Project combines three key aspects that make it very well suited to supporting programs in its targeted areas.

The college's investment in green/sustainability is supported at the strategic level by the Seattle Community College's Chancellor. Chancellor Dr. Jill Wakefield created a district-wide sustainability committee to encourage more collaboration, share ideas, and spread best practices. Where there is success and it makes sense, these innovative programs and practices can be deployed at other colleges within the district and managed either locally or on a district level. (The Seattle Community Colleges are comprised of three separately accredited colleges, including South Seattle Community College and a vocational training institute.) Over the past few years, each college has developed sustainability initiatives, programs, and practices based on its unique identity. Conversations among the colleges revealed similarities and potential for cooperation under the umbrella of sustainability.

Against this leadership backdrop, South Seattle Community College's Georgetown Campus (a satellite to the main college campus) has a strategic vision with a clear focus on sustainability. The three goals are:

1. [Expand educational opportunities](#) such as pre-apprenticeship programs and safety training
2. [Create new green jobs training](#) in manufacturing and specialized training for local employers
3. [Provide innovative services](#) that complement South Seattle Community College's education and training mission, such as entrepreneurial assistance to small business owners through strategic partnerships with government and community-based organizations.

In support of this vision the Georgetown Campus has launched several new green jobs training initiatives including:

1. [Energy audit](#) courses and certifications
2. [Conservation and weatherization](#) programs
3. [Building sustainability](#) management program
4. [New green jobs training programs](#) within the apprenticeship training program incorporating new products and practices that are more benign for the environment and the workplace, such as pervious concrete to reduce storm water runoff, a major source of pollution in Puget Sound.

In addition, the Georgetown Campus supports the largest apprenticeship training center in the Pacific Northwest, serving more than 2,000 apprentices annually – 25 percent of the state total from 25 different trades. Trades represented include Boilermakers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Drywall, Electricians, Glaziers, Ironworkers, Meat Cutters, Machinists, and Sprinkler Fitters, to name a few. The Georgetown Campus is currently co-operating with multiple Joint Apprenticeship Committees to provide related and supporting courses for apprentices and journey workers.

Two of the training programs under the GreenLight Project umbrella are also part of the Georgetown Campus' green jobs training initiatives and are part of the Campus' apprenticeship offerings. These include the Green Manufacturing course and SODO, Inc. (SODO is short for Seeking Opportunities, Developing Occupations and it's a play on the local term, South of Downtown). SODO, Inc. was already in place prior to the Pathways grant, and well respected. The partnership has been widely successful in recruiting, training, placing and retaining disadvantaged youth ages 18-24 in the manufacturing sector and introducing the participants to emerging green trends and apprenticeships opportunities. In 2010 this program received a state award for Governor's Best Practices in Workforce & Economic Development designating it a "Program to Watch."

SODO, Inc. is a four week program plus a four week internship, with 30 hours of on-site time at the Georgetown Campus, targeted to youth 18-24 years old. It includes exposure to multiple trades including electrical, welding, masonry, carpentry and painting. Participants receive certificates in First Aid/CPR, OSHA 10 Safety, Flagging and Forklift. The partnership with the local Manufacturing Industrial Council (MIC) is crucial to the program's success. MIC has long established relationships with local employers who are willing to provide internships. The goal of the internship is to give participants real world work experience that they can put on their resumes and generate a good referral. While job placements at the internship sites do occur, they are not the primary goal of the internship. Case managers are careful to clearly lay out the program expectations to participants including the need for participants to treat the program as if it were a job, with the same expectations about performance and attendance.

The 10 week Green Manufacturing course was developed specifically for the GreenLight Project. This longer program is targeted at dislocated adults. It's important to emphasize that this area of Seattle, and Seattle in general, has a very diverse population. The Seattle Community Colleges have one of the most diverse student bodies in the Northwest (supporting 80 different first languages). It is not uncommon for a participant to have had multiple years' experience in manufacturing or another career in his or her home country before coming to the US, and the program has a large ESL emphasis. WDC and its partners are careful to screen for an interest in working in manufacturing, using the World of Work Inventory which illuminates a participant's aspirations. While one week of the program is focused on work readiness, the remaining 9 weeks are split among three main areas: safety (a core component of any manufacturing work), LEAN concepts (common to all kinds of manufacturing) and in depth manufacturing principles such as applied math. The LEAN concepts section use instructors and curriculum from the state's local Manufacturing Extension Partnership office and includes elements such as Six Sigma Yellow Belt. The soft skills component includes mock interviews, creating a skills based resume (rather than chronological), and a LinkedIn page. Like SODO, Inc., this program includes a four week internship with a local employer.

The two training programs are part of the college's broader efforts to build out industry career pathways. The Georgetown Campus is ideally suited for this effort for a number of reasons. First, its proximity to business. The campus is located on a 13-acre parcel of land in the heart of Seattle's industrial zone and Washington's largest manufacturing center. It is near major airport, seaport, and manufacturing operations, making it an ideal location for industrial and trades training along with related services. In total, the campus supports more than 4,000 businesses with 70,000 employees located in the surrounding corridor. The campus' relationship with such a variety of trades (mentioned earlier) is the second reason. Third, the campus has been solidifying its core offerings in weatherization training and building out related classes to generate a full pathway for energy efficiency in the built environment.

The Georgetown Campus has a highly-regarded Residential Energy Auditing program that combines classroom instruction and hands-on fieldwork to prepare students for national certification. This course gives students skills to understand how residential buildings work as a system. Program completers are in a position to take BPI's Building Analyst Level 1 exam. From there, the Georgetown Campus is expanding its residential energy auditing program to include commercial and multi-family applications, with a long-term focus on applied associate and applied baccalaureate degrees in energy efficiency and building science and sustainability. A Level 1 Commercial Energy Auditing Class combines class and field study to teach the basics of auditing a commercial facility for energy use. The successful graduate will be able to assess and report on the status of energy use for simple commercial buildings and recommend a path forward for further investigation, upgrade and improvement. Graduates will also have instruction on the Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR Portfolio manager (a free tool that a local Seattle ordinance will require of buildings to use in future years). Students produce a Department of Energy ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager evaluation after learning to input facility and utility data. Students complete the course by creating a commercial building report on sustainability status and an industry-specific resume.

Says Joe Hauth, Director of the Puget Sound Industrial Excellent Center at South Seattle Community College:

We have apprenticeship programs onsite at our college, including green and energy efficiency related programs. We are also developing a bachelor of applied science degree program in the area of building management that provides a career ladder aspect to our offerings (which developed out of conversations from the Green Building Skill Panel described below). We've also been able to build out stackable credentials through the critical support of this and other grants. [see graphic at the end of this case study]

EMPLOYERS HELP TURN DATA INTO STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

Employer Engagement & Data-Driven Decision Making

Throughout the process, WDC and its partners have carefully cultivated employer relationships. In 2008, WDC convened the Green Design/Green Building Panel to begin conversations about workforce and industry drivers for “green jobs.” That effort generated a series of accomplishments:

1. [A survey of green building employers](#) in King County to learn which jobs are most in demand, which offer entry points into the field, and the skills needed.
2. [The production of a career exploration video](#) by the Construction Center of Excellence at Renton Technical College to get jobseekers and people looking to change careers interested in the career opportunities in the green building field.
3. [The development of Sustainability in the Building Trades](#), a DVD curriculum for trades apprentice programs statewide (mentioned above).
4. [The creation of an advanced program for building managers](#) in sustainability concepts and practices delivered by South Seattle Community College (described above).
5. [The deployment of a green jobs website](#) with connection to locally available training (www.mapyourcareer.org/green).

Each partner also has its own set of employer relationships, such as the Manufacturing Industrial Council mentioned above. The WDC is currently

reviewing the status of its Green Workforce Council, the broad stakeholder group generated by the Skill Panel, to ensure that its work is not duplicative and has value add.

David Allen of McKinstry Company (a building firm), a longtime champion of the WDC and its efforts, describes his role this way:

I serve on the WIB's green leadership council. We, as private sector employers, bring credibility to the WIB's work; I see this as a stewardship role. In 2008, we put together a green design/green building skill panel to determine if there was green demand and what the workforce implications would be. Based on this successful panel, we did a second round which was cross-sector. This has now evolved into the Green Workforce Leadership Council led by the WDC that covers green building, manufacturing, energy, transportation and environment.

Though the Green Leadership Council is on hiatus, other employer connections continue as usual. A very successful job fair was conducted in March 2011 at Rainier Vista, a community facility centrally situated in one of the two designated Seattle PUMAs. The Job Fair was attended by 10 local employers, who all had legitimate job openings: Boeing, ecoFab, Anderson Construction, Kenworth, Dynacraft, Absher Construction, Emerald Services/Cedar Grove, Turner Construction, NW Laborers Apprenticeship Program, and King County Solid Waste Division. 67 GreenLight participants attended, as well as the case managers from four partner agencies, WDC staff, and the Seattle Housing Authority, the local agency and partner working with case managers to identify Job Fair Outcomes.

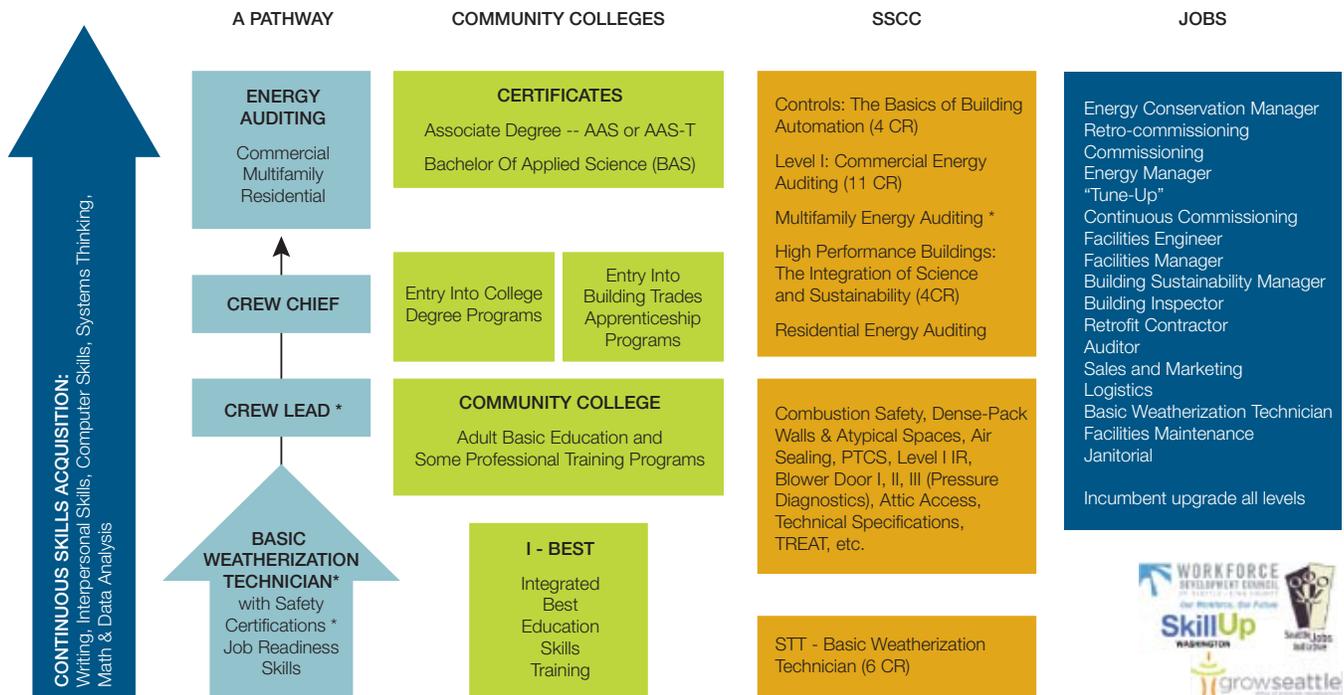
CREATING LONG TERM IMPACT

Sustainable Systems Change & Leveraging Resources

Marlena Sessions sums up WDC's approach this way:

As a WIB, we think of ourselves as a think and do tank. We believe that working with partners is the only way to be successful in the long term, and we think it's the depth and breadth of our partnerships that allows us to figure out green in as many ways as possible. We are part of three ARRA green grants (SESP, POP and ETP). All of this is about systems change: the way we work together, AND the way we create a sustainable future for ourselves.

BUILDING SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & POLICY -- CERTIFICATE & CAREER PATHWAYS



* Leads to industry-recognized certification(s)

state energy sector partnership & training

colorado department of
labor & employment

north carolina department
of commerce, division of
workforce development

commonwealth of massachusetts,
executive office of labor &
workforce development

colorado department of labor and employment

Denver, Colorado

SGA Type - State Energy Sector Partnership and Training

Contact - Tom.Morgan@state.co.us, (303) 318-8191

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Colorado Department of Labor & Employment (CDLE) provides information and tools to help businesses and workers in Colorado stay competitive. The scope of assistance provided by CDLE includes: connecting job seekers with jobs; providing economic data for decision making; assisting workers injured while on the job; ensuring fair labor practices; providing temporary wage replacement through an Unemployment Insurance Program; providing consumer protection and safety programs.

CDLE will implement the State Energy Sector Partnership to ensure that the state has a qualified workforce that allows Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and conservation firms to prosper and grow. The partnership will also prepare workers in Colorado to qualify for jobs in the new energy economy through several activities: the Energy Sector Entrepreneurial Pilot Project; Statewide Apprenticeship Partnership program; a Green Training Curriculum to create hands-on training in Energy Efficiency Audits, Wind Turbine Safety, and Solar Energy and other related occupations; Energy Scholarships for participants; Youth Conservation Corps; and a Youth Outreach campaign to train student ambassadors to educate parents and peers about green practices and career opportunities.



Tom Morgan
Tom.Morgan@state.co.us

PROMISING PRACTICES

LISTENING TO BUSINESS NEEDS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

Employer Engagement & Alignment with Economic Development

Colorado's SESP team, faced with a 91 percent placement rate goal, quickly realized that they would need to work with the state's employers very closely, and to help those employers with their incumbent workforce first. They were encouraged by state policy that emphasized "growing our own companies," rather than an over-reliance on industrial recruitment. As a result, the Colorado SESP adopted a "grow business first" approach to employer engagement. They actively seek out businesses, and find out what could enable, or what holds back, their growth. The grant includes the creation of a Business Advisory Council (BAC) to help guide business related policy. The BAC is the best resource for information on what businesses need to grow. Employers responded "stop surveying us about what new people we need. We need our existing workforce to have new skills so we can survive and grow."

The Colorado team believes that the workforce system needs to ensure that it's listening to employers and their needs. Then, put together the package and the partners (including energy, economic development, others) that make sense. With this approach, Colorado has been able to build trust and growing engagement with employers by helping them with their incumbent worker needs, so that they can begin to work with them on a broader range of challenges. As a result, the Council is deeply involved in the SESP work, including evaluating all training programs and curriculum before they move into implementation. The creation and continued engagement of businesses in this Council ensures the body will remain active in advising the Colorado Workforce Development Council beyond the expiration of the SESP grant.

One example that illustrates the benefits of this approach: The Colorado Legislature passed a law requiring that the performance of all photovoltaic electrical work, the installation of photovoltaic modules, and the installation of photovoltaic module mounting equipment would be subject to on-site supervision by a certified photovoltaic energy practitioner as designated by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) or

another nationally recognized professional organization designated by the Colorado State Electrical Board by rule. After talking with local contractors, they discovered that they needed incumbent worker training to achieve this certification to enable the companies to be more competitive in the bidding on these projects. As a result, many of these contractors have been able to successfully secure a role in these projects, and have been able to stabilize their employment or grow as a result.

To keep the circle of employer engagement continuously expanding, the Colorado SESP team pursues an ongoing process to reach out to multiple industry associations to find potential placement opportunities and understand priority training needs. They also keep the Business Advisory Council involved and active, rather than engaging them once on the front end. To facilitate this continuing engagement, the SESP team is purposeful in ensuring that every meeting with employers has something of value for them (e.g., learning more about their industry, touring a local laboratory, finding out about financing options from the state energy office, etc.), in addition to completing the immediate work at hand.

In addition to working with existing employers, Colorado is working with some participants to help them become entrepreneurs and start their own companies through the Energy Entrepreneurial Program. The objective is to create a systematic approach to breaking down silos among the stakeholders and organizations involved in entrepreneurial development and establish a sustainable non-funded working group functioning without government red tape to collaborate on finding, training, supporting and helping provide access to funding for clean energy businesses in Colorado (i.e., to "move at the speed of business"). Energy efficiency and renewable energy entrepreneurial development can serve to develop and test the model, which could be applied more broadly to entrepreneurial development across all sectors. To this end, Colorado has created Clean Energy Business Colorado, a group of well networked and highly influential volunteers from a variety of backgrounds: bankers, credit unions, the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, the Colorado Cleantech Industry Association, incubators, the Small Business Development Councils, business, the workforce system, economic development and others.

The entrepreneurial development project accommodates two types of business development communities – both with distinct needs. The first group includes those in the service sector with relatively low start-up costs and consequently small loan capital requirements. The second group is tech oriented and will require larger sums of venture capital to test, develop, market and manufacture their projects. The goal of the program is to develop at least 30 new businesses, to aid unemployed Coloradans and to advocate for entrepreneurial development in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors in the state.

To manage the project, the board of above mentioned volunteers developed goals and strategies for the project. They determined vetting processes for prospective entrepreneurs, and created outreach efforts to engage the community.

The Colorado SESP model for entrepreneurial development has already been adopted by the Center for Renewable Energy and Economic Development (CREED) at the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL). The model is also under consideration for adoption by the Colorado Workforce Development Council as a state model for entrepreneurial development in all industries.

COLORADO SESP STEERING COMMITTEE

*Policy Alignment, Leveraging Resources
& Partnership Building*

Colorado's SESP has a steering committee composed of multiple state agencies and private employers. Partners have been forthcoming with resources to help implement and scale their shared agenda. It aligns with the state energy office, which helps with targeting growing green industry subsectors. In addition, community energy representatives from the state energy office have joined with local workforce system staff to meet with businesses in different regions of the State, bringing a comprehensive package of assistance to the table. They have also aligned their efforts with the SESP public awareness building partner, Groundwork Denver. The Colorado Department of Labor and the Governors' energy office share an employee (each pays half) to facilitate this kind of alignment. In addition, the effort is aligned with local economic development councils. Colorado conducts monthly meetings of all SESP sub-grantees and other Green Jobs grantees (the Green Jobs Collaborative) to align grants, share successful strategies and lessons learned, and prevent redundancies.

APPRENTICESHIPS, CAREER EDUCATION, AND INNOVATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS *Continuum of Participant Support*

Colorado developed a training asset map, including extensive information about programs. Development of the asset map was a collaborative effort between SESP, the Governor's Energy Office and the Jefferson County Workforce Center. Through this network, training providers were located and individually contacted with a request for detailed information about available clean energy training opportunities, instructors, certifications, students trained, and more. The asset map is a living document with new providers and programs being added as demand for services increases. Colorado actively leverages a continuum of services through WIA, TANF, and other funding streams, and has several innovative strategies such as apprenticeship support, public awareness and outreach, a renewable energy workshop, and a new first-in-the-nation industry recognized professional and technical smart grid certification with hands-on lab instruction.

The first challenge in supporting apprentices is dealing with a four or five year apprenticeship with a three year grant life. The second is ensuring that the apprenticeship curriculum meets the EE/RE requirements – often not the case. In the procurement solicitation for apprenticeship training, Colorado SESP offered to support only the last 18 months of an apprenticeship and required evidence that the curriculum contain specialized training in EE/RE skills relevant to the occupation. Colorado SESP thinks of this as comparable to a college education where the first two years are spent gaining core knowledge and the second two years are spent narrowing in on a major. Colorado SESP is asking apprentices to major in EE/RE. For example, The Independent Electrical Contractors added a new G PRO Fundamentals of Green Building and G Pro Electrical Systems series to the apprenticeship curriculum. Colorado SESP has 182 apprentices under the G PRO training.

Colorado's SESP sub-grantees were tasked with the development of a Renewable Energy Workshop to provide EE/RE career path information to customers at workforce centers. The result of the procurement, led by Georgia Howard, was a partnership with Regis Learning Solutions that developed an on-line training tool called GreenCareersCo.com. This site has already been featured by ETA in an April Leaflet (bi-weekly digest from DOL to grantees) and is featured on Colorado Community College website. This site has already been featured by ETA in an April Leaflet (bi-weekly digest from DOL to grantees) and is featured on Colorado's Community College website. The link has been distributed to high school counselors and principals statewide and is available on every workforce center site.

This is an interactive and engaging experience for the viewer. The overview video is geared to a younger target market. The site contains self evaluation and career planning tools as well as the opportunity to create a walk-away printout. The tool provides background

information on what constitutes a green job and presents statistics showing growth in green jobs, lists federal programs, state policies and training programs that support green job growth. The program highlights twelve different green industries that have promising job growth potential in Colorado. For each of the twelve industries, job types, locations, salary ranges, qualifications, educational requirements, and future advancements in the industry are detailed. See the image below for a screen shot of the interactive tool's homepage (<http://greencareersco.com/>).

Using leveraged funds from the Colorado Workforce Development Council, SESP is leading a partnership with Front Range Community College, CU, CSU and businesses to create the first-in-the-nation industry recognized professional and technical certification for Smart Grid with hands-on lab instruction. The program will provide training for engineers and other skilled workers needed to implement smart grid technologies in Colorado.



USING DATA TO ADAPT PROGRAMS

Data-Driven Decision Making

The Colorado SESP depends on Labor Market Information (LMI), data from Examination Management Services, Inc. (EMSI) and other workforce system data to influence and adapt training programs to meet current and projected labor needs. Many training programs are several years long and labor market conditions can evolve throughout the duration of the program. Colorado SESP has been able to use data to adapt current programs so students graduate with a relevant skill set for the current employment climate. As an example, data projections showed a difficult future for electrical apprentices so Colorado SESP modified the curriculum to concentrate on green skills in the last 18 months of the SESP-supported apprenticeship, giving graduates experience in a growing industry sector.

By having businesses engaged in their effort, the Colorado SESP diversifies the sources of data available to them to make training program decisions. The SESP Business Advisory Council in Colorado presented data showing a collapse in the solar installation industry due to the local energy provider slashing solar rebates. The Council recommended that all solar installation training should be put on hold, helping to avoid training efforts and resources being poured into an industry with limited job prospects.

LESSONS LEARNED

Colorado has found that its “strategic agility” has enabled them to challenge assumptions, view new realities clearly, build new and stronger partnerships, and take innovative steps that are producing breakthrough results. They have also discovered that the flexibility of the SESP funding has enabled them to go beyond the limitations of a WIA funding model, focusing on the critical front-line needs of employers for more capable incumbent workers and expanded apprenticeships, which have in turn helped companies stabilize and even grow in a very difficult economic environment. It has enabled the workforce system in Colorado to gain much greater penetration into the employer community (prior to SESP, only nine percent of employers ever had worked with the system in any fashion). This greater level of engagement, they believe, is laying a foundation for lasting change in workforce development in Colorado, a shift that can be supported and accelerated by federal policy that encourages the kind of “strategic agility” described here.

commonwealth of massachusetts, executive office of labor and workforce development

Boston, Massachusetts

SGA Type - State Energy Sector Partnership and Training

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2009 the U.S. Department of Labor awarded a \$5.9 million grant to the Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board to support employment and training programs that prepare Massachusetts' residents for jobs in the Commonwealth's clean energy sector. The Massachusetts Energy Sector Partnership is co-convened by Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Commonwealth Corporation led the planning and proposal development process, convenes and leads the state project implementation team and manages the grant on behalf of the Board. Commonwealth Corporation has formed and supports a grantee learning community, provides technical assistance to grantees, manages performance indicators and documents lessons learned. Additionally, CommCorp identifies opportunities and develops strategies to build statewide capacity and system improvement for clean energy workforce development. The Board selected eight organizations to form partnerships with including clean energy sector businesses, workforce investment boards, colleges, career centers, labor organizations and community based organizations to design and deliver program services.



Theresa Rowland
trowland@commcorp.org

PROMISING PRACTICES

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH- UNIONS AND WIBs *Partnership Building & Employer Engagement*

Massachusetts designed its SESP process to encourage unions as well as WIBs to become sub-grantees (regional teams). The state has eight regional teams. Five of them are WIB based- Massachusetts has 16 WIBs in the state, so consortia of WIBs applied to become sub-grantees. The SESP also has three union partnerships. The state worked with the Massachusetts AFL-CIO to invite proposals from the trades union. The three union regional teams are the Finishing Trades Institute of New England (painters), the Plumbers Local 12 Education Fund, and the Boston Carpenters' Apprenticeship and Training Fund.

The SESP Program Manager, Theresa Rowland reports that having a mix of sub-grantees has been incredibly beneficial to all the regional teams. They've learned so much from each other. The first hurdle was learning each others' acronyms! Over the last year, conversations have ranged from operational norms to variations in approaches to recruitment and job placement. Specifically, unions have benefited from learning more about the WIBs' historical expertise in case management and supportive services, while the WIBs have been able to leverage the unions' selection process and employer engagement strategies. Unions, because of their apprenticeship and "earn while you learn" structure, tend to have quite a robust infrastructure for job placement. Participants are members of the union, with access to its built-in professional network. While an actual job placement may take several months to occur, the training graduates continue to engage with the union throughout that time due to the membership structure of the union. WIBs, on the other hand, have historical expertise in case management and supportive services. With relatively low unemployment during the 1990s and through the mid 2000s, job placement activities in One-Stops tended to focus on preparing individuals for job search and interviews and responding to job postings and traditional employer engagement. The role of the job developer at One-Stops has shifted dramatically over the last 3-4 years to a much deeper employer engagement model. In this shift, the regional teams have been able to learn from each other.

The union-WIB mix of regional teams has also significantly increased each organization's understanding of each others' operations. WIB teams have a much more robust understanding of how apprenticeships are structured, how participants are recruited into an apprenticeship, and how training is delivered. In particular, they've learned how unions read the job market for placements. On the other hand, unions have deepened their understanding of the WIB and One-Stop infrastructure, how referrals are made across One-Stops, for instance. Teams have even begun to engage in conversations about cross referral in the case of a person who belongs to a union who seeks services in a One-Stop, and vice versa.

One additional benefit of the regional team approach is the WIB consortia model. It has really strengthened cross-WIB partnerships and streamlined processes. For example, even within a single consortium, WIBs might have different employer approaches. These partnerships have given them a way to see firsthand the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches.

Partnership building capacity has also taken place within regional teams among WIBs and community colleges. One regional team, in western Massachusetts, includes a WIB and a community college who had already partnered together on a prior grant, which the community college won to develop a certificate program. They applied to the SESP, and the WIB won the grant on behalf of the regional team. Their partnership has served as a model for the newer members of the SESP regional team.

LEARNING THE "CLEAN ENERGY" CONTEXT *Aligning with Economic Development & Policy Alignment*

One of the most fundamental benefits Massachusetts sees of the SESP grant is its impact on increasing the capacity of WIBs, One-Stops and unions to more deeply understand the economic and policy drivers of the clean energy economy. The state designed its Steering Committee to be comprised of two halves: one half comes from the state WIB board and the other comes from the state's Clean Energy Center, a quasi-public agency to accelerate job growth and economic development in the state's clean energy industry (see <http://www.masscec.com>). The Green Jobs Act of

2008 created the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) to accelerate job growth and economic development in the state's clean energy industry. This quasi-public agency serves as a clearinghouse and support center for the clean energy sector, making direct investments in new and existing companies, providing assistance to enable companies to access capital and other vital resources for growth, and promoting training programs to build a strong clean energy workforce that capitalizes on the job opportunities created by a vital new industry. The mission of Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp), also a quasi public agency, is to build upward mobility pathways for Massachusetts' youth and adults to prepare for high-demand careers, in concert with state and regional partners. While the MassCEC contributes expertise about the industry needs, CommCorp provides expertise in workforce development strategies and system capacity building. Having this combination of workforce, energy, and economic expertise is invaluable to the effectiveness of the grant.

CommCorp convenes quarterly regional grantee team meetings and monthly project implementation meetings. Marybeth Campbell, Workforce Development Program Director at the MassCEC, attends the SESP's monthly project management meeting and participates in the quarterly meeting with the regional teams. This direct connection, along with the expertise of the MassCEC membership on the Steering Committee, has enhanced the quality of the feedback and advice the regional teams receive when they make presentations to the Steering Committee.

Efforts to understand the clean energy economy at the regional level began even before the SESP officially launched. One of the state's regional teams really exemplifies pre-planning and knowing your context. This regional team is based in Boston, where, prior to the SESP grant, there were already many groups and networks devoted to green revitalization, clean energy, urban renewal, and other groups, all with a "green" angle. The partnership, in the course of applying for the grant, did an inventory of all these groups and networks, to avoid creating a redundant group just to apply to the grant. They used a pre-existing clean energy working group of one of the three WIBs to create the seed of the regional team, and actively cultivate their role as part of a larger network of groups in the Boston area.

These efforts to understand the economic drivers of the clean energy economy continue. By talking to employers and learning from the MassCEC, regional teams are piecing together an understanding of the funding streams (federal incentives, state rebate programs, federal programs like the Weatherization Assistance Program) that drive large parts of this sector of the economy. The regional teams are coupling this knowledge with increased expertise about what drives consumer demand. As Theresa Rowland, SESP Program Manager describes it: "The teams have a much better sense of how employers ultimately get paid- their revenue streams. Does it come from a federal funding stream? Increased consumer demand from a particular market segment? How does that impact the employer's ability to sell more products/secure more projects (and in turn hire more people)? Now regional teams can really talk to employers about what will make their business grow." The direct benefit of this level of understanding is an increased ability to partner with employers to understand their overall business needs and outlook, not just hiring demand. In many cases, employers are equally uncertain about which policy drivers will remain to drive economic growth, or which credentials will really matter to their customers or industry peers. By having a much deeper understanding of this context, WIBs and unions are in a much better position to partner with employers.

To that end, the state has been as flexible as possible on meeting employer needs within its SGA. For example, a long-talked about biodiesel plan finally broke ground in one of its regional team's areas, and they needed trained workers. When the state wrote its grant, bio-diesel training was not included, but the state is incorporating this training into the work being done through the grant.

Ultimately, this knowledge translates into effective training and curriculum development. One of the regional teams is developing the training for a certificate called NATE (North American Technical Excellence <http://www.natex.org/>) that the employers value in the HVAC area. NATE includes a basic core competency and a variety of specialty areas. The vocational training provider is developing the core curricula, and the community college is developing the coursework for the specialty areas; it's a seamless experience for the participants.

LEVERAGING RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL IMPACT

Leveraging Resources

Each regional partnership was required to propose a leveraged funds commitment. State staff track this quarterly. This includes traditional in-kind matching funds (lead grantee staff time, etc.) and other programs locally funded that contribute to the SESP grant in their region.

The SESP team also identified opportunities to leverage pre-existing resources. For example, the Clean Energy Center and CommCorp in 2009 jointly funded the development of new clean energy training programs. The two organizations awarded six grants totaling \$1 million to develop comprehensive workforce development programs for the clean energy industry. The six grantees produced more than 30 lesson plans, certificates and training programs for high school and college students, at-risk youth and low-income populations, building and trade professionals, and clean energy employers. Topics ranged from solar photovoltaic and solar thermal installation, energy efficiency practices and best practices in developing train-the-trainer programs for construction trade programs in vocational schools, to programs for university level undergraduate and graduate students that address the engineering, business, politics and economics of clean energy. All project descriptions and curriculum, including downloadable files for each lesson, are available at www.masscec.com/curriculum and <http://www.commcorp.org/areas/program.cfm?ID=72&p=30>. This investment was deliberately designed to create curriculum that other workforce training providers could use. The SESP regional teams are now able to take advantage of this added capacity and utilize the curriculum that was developed to enhance the curriculum in the SESP grant.

CHANGING THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS

Sustainable Systems Change

With one year of the grant complete, SESP managers are looking to the future. Next up on the agenda: kick-starting a strategic conversation on how job placement really gets done at the regional level. Regional teams and unions all have different titles and positions within their efforts related to job placement. The question is: who owns this responsibility? In what cases is the assumption implicit, in what cases is the responsibility shared among

several people, and in what cases is the assumption explicit? Is the case manager at the One-Stop ultimately responsible for job placement? Is it the business services representative? Is it the regional team's coordinator? How is this handled in the union setting? What role does the training instructor play in job placement? These are the strategy questions the SESP regional teams will explore over the coming year. The ultimate goal is not to prescribe one specific model, but rather to uncover what works and where better transparency about roles and responsibilities, as well as focused technical assistance can enhance effectiveness.

PEER LEARNING

Grants Management

Managing a federal grant is no small undertaking. While many of the WIBs had managed large grants in the past, for two of the union regional teams, this grant is their first experience with a federal grant. State staff has worked closely with the union teams to support them in areas such as documentation of job placement and retention, areas which are common to WIBs familiar with these reporting requirements but which are not part of unions' day to day operations.

The state SESP team has also invested significantly in infrastructure and planning time to ensure cross-team knowledge exchange. Says Theresa Rowland, SESP Program Manager:

Having the teams come in for the regional meetings has really solidified relationships among the project managers (the state administrative staff) and the regional team members. We see the result in our site visits with the teams. They know us and are comfortable when we are around. We've also increased our own knowledge, especially at the senior administrative level, when we go on site visits. We also use a shared virtual space called Wiggio (<http://wiggio.com/>) where we put all related project documents for the teams, and they can share their tools with each other. That's been successful.

north carolina department of commerce, division of workforce development

Raleigh, North Carolina

SGA Type - State Energy Sector Partnership and Training

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Studies indicate growing demand in the energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture industries for the State of North Carolina. Yet, general employability skills including literacy, numeracy, and problem solving are not sufficient to meet these industry needs. Employees also need specific industry skills and certifications in order to be employable. The addition of energy-related training will allow many dislocated workers to transfer into new jobs and careers. The NC SESP grant, Green is Gold for NC, includes four geographically diverse Regional Teams that applied through a competitive process and were selected as sub-grantees. The teams include: 1) Wx/East (Weatherization, Energy and Solar Training Project); 2) NE NC GEI (Northeastern North Carolina Green Economy Initiative); 3) Lumber River All About Green and; 4) Future Forward Workforce Alliance. Collectively these teams represent 38 rural counties across the state. Each Regional Team has a specific statement of work and performance measures to meet, but they share the common issues of high unemployment, working with limited resources and the challenge of providing training opportunities in rural North Carolina.



Janice Ivey
jivey@nccommerce.com

PROMISING PRACTICES

WORKING WITH REALTORS AND GREEN COUNCILS

Employer Engagement & Partnership Building



Northeastern North Carolina Green Economy Initiative (NE-NC GEI) is working with a group of realtor companies who are coming together to receive a green certification through the national association of realtors and creating a market in remodeling and construction for Building Performance Institute (BPI) trained participants. These BPI trained graduates can conduct energy audits for realtors which provide a competitive sales advantage for realtors who are selling homes to incoming retirees to the state. This new relationship with realtors has resulted in the employment of one participant to date.

The NE-NC GEI Team has shifted its strategy over time in response to employer needs. This team started with a Green Business Owners' Council, though it became clear that this group was comprised mostly of aspiring green entrepreneurs who were just starting their own businesses and unlikely to have placement opportunities for participants. As a result, while that group continues to meet, the team has shifted to focusing on more established employers. This invited group of 70 plus employers meets regularly and concentrates half of the meeting focus on their specific training needs for incumbent workers and new hires. The other half of the meeting centers on linkages with the Small Business and Technology Development Center to assist with their operational and business development needs.

This new approach is giving the Regional Team the opportunity to learn about employer training needs for incumbents and new hires, as well as providing important connections and resources to this group of employers. The Business Owners' Council also provides an opportunity for employers to network together, leverage shared resources, and create opportunities for growth. For example, a few members came together to create Sprout, a sustainable energy teaching tool that can calculate amounts of wind and solar power production. There is a business plan behind this tool that will create jobs in areas such as production and maintenance. This council is creating a demand for sustainable energy practices by helping employers gain a better understanding of the value of sustainable practices.

In the Western Application region of the state, the Future Forward Workforce Alliance Regional Team has a successful Green Champions Council that represents all green sectors and whose members are willing to travel over one hour to come to 60-90 minute quarterly meetings. In a rural setting, this council provides a sense of community and like-mindedness for those who are involved in green business. The local community college donates the space. One indication of engagement is that the group has grown from six to 25 members and members are inviting others to join through peer conversations, rather than staff having to grow the membership alone. Meetings include a variety of opportunities to discuss sustainability with agenda items ranging from employer speakers sharing how they have gone 100 percent sustainable and the benefit and costs savings of operating sustainable, to opportunities to dialogue with community colleges about curriculum design. As a result of a community college coming to one of these meetings, the college became willing to create a custom training. These council dialogues have led to increased asks for training requests and pooled training. To keep members engaged between quarterly meetings, the council uses a LinkedIn account for members to connect with others. One staff person quotes, "Members find it just as eye-opening as we do- learning from each other."

The Future Forward Regional Team is able to find out about employer workforce needs from soft-skill to specific certifications. They have been able to partner with the Industrial Extension Service at North Carolina State University to provide training according to what employers' request. Through the work of the council, employers in this region are now realizing that they can define the training they want and not just pick from a menu. They now know that they can have custom training designed for them that can result in industry recognized certifications.

The Lumber Region All About Green sub-grantee put on a large one day conference (free of charge for attendees) focusing on green construction and green agriculture. One hundred and fifty people attended and unearthed 3-4 key construction employers for the Regional Team. The conference also helped the Team learn that "advanced construction" had more resonance than "green construction" in the area.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Policy Alignment

North Carolina has an SESP Steering Committee that has a two-fold purpose. It operates as an accountability agent for regional teams, and provides linkages to resources for them as well. The Steering Committee includes a well respected sustainability nonprofit. This organization's representative keeps the committee updated on trends which are of great value to the committee. The steering committee has a member of the state energy office who was very helpful to the local



SESP sub-grantees when they were trying to access ARRA WAP funds for weatherization efforts through local community action agencies. Having that network available to sub-grantees helped them make the right contacts. In addition, the regional teams present to the steering committee quarterly and gain feedback and advice from this group. Grantees credit working in a small community as helping with policy alignment because people know each other personally. For example, Lumber River All About Green needed to find a place where participants could gain some solar experience as required for job openings. A member of the Steering Committee sent an email to the committee and came up with 20 different options for the sub-grantee.

FACE-TO-FACE SITE VISITS TO UNCOVER GREEN DEMAND

Data-Driven Decision Making & Employer Engagement

The Lumber River Region All About Green conducted a survey of 30-40 construction employers with the goal of creating tangible qualitative and quantitative evidence of "green" demand to take to the community colleges and economic developers.

This initial hard copy and electronic mailing resulted in a low response rate. The team changed tactics, and instead made informal site visits on Friday afternoons to construction sites and conducted the survey orally with managers. Though a considerable amount of effort, the team found that face-to-face conversations were more effective and considers this strategy to be good marketing for their project's efforts. Prior to the survey effort, the team had no relationship with these businesses.

The Future Forward Regional Team has also adopted an in-person employer engagement strategy. This strategy has proven to be more beneficial to them as they are working in a very rural area with high unemployment, and they believe that face-to-face interactions build greater trust with employers.



FROM RETROFITTED MOBILE TRAINING UNITS TO FARMERS MARKETS TAILGATES

Leveraging Resources

The Wx/East (Weatherization, Energy and Solar Training Project) Regional Team has a continuing education program with BPI affiliation. This program uses a mobile unit to reach participants. The program leveraged the construction program at the local community college to retrofit the mobile unit for educational purposes. Wx/East did not have to pay for materials or workers to build this out. The Regional Team is hoping to expand this continuing education program and make it a part of the regular curriculum.

The NE-NC GEI (Northeastern North Carolina Green Economy Initiative) Regional Team was able to work with the local community action group (Economic Improvement Council) doing weatherization work in the region and provide Regional Team participants with paid work experience. The Economic Employment Council has hired four participants and two more are slated to be hired once their training is complete.

Lumber River All About Green - a component of their grant concentrates on sustainable agriculture. The Regional Team has had phenomenal success with the five county, locally recognized sustainable agriculture



course. The course was developed based on employer needs and employer approval. The course leverages resources from the USDA as they offer the pesticide certification for free. The first class graduated in February and they continue to meet together and have developed a tailgate (back of truck) farmers market with the assistance of a program marketing instructor. This group has also leveraged marketing and outreach from the local community college's Bio Network program. The tailgates have been very successful with every single market selling out of products. The group is now working towards building a more permanent structure and location. There is now a waiting list for this program as farmers are calling wanting to participate.



Green is Gold for NC also leverages advice and knowledge gained from the combined technical assistance resources such as the Success Factors Framework, Community of Practice sites, learning networks, promising practices, and group calls. These learning opportunities have provided the North Carolina SESP grantees with connections to other SESP grantees that are experiencing similar challenges. The technical assistance has helped to provide this connection.

energy training partnership

austin electrical joint apprenticeship
training committee

austin electrical joint apprenticeship training committee

Arizona, Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico and Texas

SGA Type - Energy Training Partnership

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (AEJATC), a local training arm of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), is partnering with ImagineSolar, a training provider, and Workforce Solutions – Capital Area Workforce Board to create a Comprehensive-National Electrician Solar Training (CNEST) initiative. CNEST combines utility-scale solar installation training designed to meet anticipated employment needs at solar power plants in Austin and San Antonio with general solar training intended to support capacity-building in the project’s five-state region.



Peter Brodeur
peter.brodeur@twc.state.tx.us

PROMISING PRACTICES

CO-LOCATION LEADS TO STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND RAPID RAMPING UP OF TRAINING

Partnership Building & Leveraging Resources

AEJATC first entered into a partnership with ImagineSolar, a small for-profit training provider, in early 2009, before having applied for or receiving its DOL grant. ImagineSolar designed and implemented a training program to prepare the IBEW membership and National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) contractors to be a competitive qualified workforce in the solar photovoltaic (PV) industry. In return, AEJATC gave ImagineSolar the use of its training facility to conduct training for the general public as well as for union members.

The co-location of ImagineSolar in the AEJATC training center has resulted in the rapid ramp up of training for the DOL grant due to the every-day communications, participation in Board of Trustee meetings, and rapid decision-making capabilities made possible by literally being down the hall from each other. As an example, though ImagineSolar brought their own curricula into to the program, AEJATC had their own as well, and the two organizations worked together to develop training roadmaps of complementary courses.

In addition, ImagineSolar has established relationships with national and regional IBEW leadership that have resulted in rapid implementation of the DOL grant modification that allows for training throughout the five-state region called the IBEW 7th District.

PARTNERSHIPS STRENGTHENED THROUGH CLEARLY DEFINED ROLES

Partnership Building & Continuum of Participant Support

In addition to the partnership with ImagineSolar, AEJATC has formed a close partnership with the local workforce board, Workforce Solutions, which acts as the fiscal and administrative agent for the grant. Having Workforce Solutions handle the fiscal and administrative roles has allowed AEJATC and ImagineSolar to focus their energies on training and outreach. The three organizations worked together to develop the grant application and have remained successful because of their clearly defined roles, frequent communication, team spirit and passion for solar technology. The clearly defined roles and responsibilities are outlined in a partnership agreement. Frequent communication between the partners is aided by regular meetings and the co-location of ImagineSolar and AEJATC.

The three organizations have also enjoyed a close partnership with the local community college through the college's workforce development component. The Vice President of Instruction at the college sits on the Board of Directors of Workforce Solutions. ImagineSolar worked with the community college to develop solar power curriculum. Now the college offers classes in all kinds of renewable energy—wind, solar, thermal and energy efficiency—as well as a two-year Associates Degree in renewable energy. Austin Community College is now considering giving credit in the future to the trainees who complete ImagineSolar's solar training.

Having clearly defined roles has also enabled the three partner organizations to provide targeted support to participants. Because approximately 75 percent of the participants are incumbent workers, there has not been strong demand for a number of support services. Those trainees who are not incumbent workers and who may need support services are offered information on how to connect to WIA resources through Workforce Solutions, the local workforce investment board.

STRONG OUTREACH AND PUBLIC RELATIONS EXPAND RECRUITMENT POOL

Continuum of Participant Support, Leveraging Resources & Partnership Building

The grant partners have worked to expand the pool of trainees through a variety of efforts, from developing flyers to presenting at jobs fairs and setting up a call bank to answer questions about the program from potential trainees. Staff have contacted or visited other local unions in the IBEW 7th District to further expand their recruitment pool. A number of local unions include a full-page color promotional ad (designed by ImagineSolar) for the training in their monthly newsletter. Incumbent workers have been recruited through union hall meetings, National Electrical Contractors Association meetings and apprenticeship training classes.

AEJATC and ImagineSolar have sponsored several open houses at the training center to promote PV solar training and have given tours of the training facilities to companies interested in hiring union contractors. ImagineSolar has set up press opportunities to showcase union electricians in Texas and Kansas receiving training to be a qualified for work in the solar industry.

To further expand training efforts, the partners reached out to the IBEW 7th District Vice President to email a number of JATCs to determine their interest in solar training. This level of support from the top tier of management drew a lot of attention to the program, and ImagineSolar staff now travel to JATC training centers in four states (in addition to Texas) to provide training. The three organizations have seen the largest increase in relationships by working with JATCs in other states.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS TARGET UNEXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

Leveraging Resources

The CNEST partners have also reached out to potential participants through Workforce Solutions One-Stop centers. This element of their outreach strategy has allowed them to reach out to veterans, but it has also led to opportunities to offer training to an unexpected audience: trainees who want to learn about the

solar energy field but do not anticipate working as electricians. These participants are often looking for positions in fields such as cost analysis, finance, project management, engineering, and marketing but want to make a connection to the solar industry, so they go through a portion of the solar training provided by ImagineSolar. This gives the partners a role not just in preparing electricians for work in solar industries, but also in growing and strengthening the industry as a whole through providing training to a broader audience, which may result in increased job opportunities for those electricians and non-electricians who have gone through solar training.

FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS WITH EMPLOYERS ARE KEY

Employer Engagement

AEJATC and ImagineSolar have found face-to-face meetings with employers to be a key mechanism for employer engagement. Face-to-face meetings create a deeper bond and relationship that makes subsequent communications easier. By meeting with employers and asking questions, they better understand employer needs and are better able to explain the extent and value of the training offered via the CNEST grant program.

In addition to face-to-face meetings, the three organizations have launched an Employers Outreach Program so that employers have up-to-date information about CNEST activities and graduates. This has included a push to distribute information through social networking sites, such as LinkedIn, where employers are able to view resumes of alumni and see the quality of the training. Since the start of the employer outreach program in January 2011, they have sent out approximately 800 invitations to join the Alumni LinkedIn page. In addition to hosting resumes of training graduates, this page is updated weekly with available positions in the solar industry and allows the participants an option for discussions. Similarly, ImagineSolar's Facebook page hosts postings about open positions and employment opportunities.

The partners have also worked to connect program graduates with employers by establishing relationships with HR companies who know the quality of the training program and the caliber of the candidates who complete the training. Offering tours of the training facilities to employers has been another successful way to reach out to local employers.

STRONG TRAINING LEADS TO OPPORTUNITY TO PILOT NATIONAL CERTIFICATION PATHWAY

Partnership Building & Continuum of Participant Support

The three partner organizations are working with the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) to pilot a training program, the Alternative Installation Experience Pathway (AIEP), which allows trainees to obtain installation credits and quickens their path to receiving a PV Installer Certification.

When NABCEP came out with the AIEP, the CNEST partners contacted NABCEP to communicate their interest in offering the pathway to a sub-set of their trainees. NABCEP toured CNEST's existing training program and decided to launch a pilot program with ImagineSolar and AEJATC. The training program starts with incumbent electricians and puts them through 128 contact hours. In their last courses, they go through a practicum exam that includes actual installation on the rooftop of a building. Once participants pass the practicum exam, they are able to sit for the certification exam, which is offered twice a year. Since the start of the pilot program in June 2010, 63 electricians have fulfilled requirements necessary to take the certification exam. Eight CNEST graduates took and passed the

exam in September 2010, and they now represent a full ten percent of NABCEP-certified workers in the state of Texas. Another 15 trainees took the exam in March 2011, and 50 percent passed the exam. (The overall pass rate is usually around 25 percent.) As the certification increasingly appears as a requirement on proposals, having the certification expands the employment opportunities of AIEP graduates. For example, the University of Texas in San Antonio recently released a proposal to install a solar electric system with the requirement that only contractors who employed fully certified electricians could bid on the project.

PATHWAYS OPTIONS ENABLE PARTICIPANTS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EXPERTISE

Continuum of Participant Support

The NABCEP certification is offered as a pathway for electricians who participate in the CNEST training program, but it is not the only pathway. Incumbent electricians may or may not participate in the preparation for the NABCEP certification. Furthermore, the CNEST partners train a number of individuals who have not yet gone through an IBEW apprenticeship to be an electrician. CNEST training takes these individuals through both basic electrical training as well as the solar component, from basic installation design and theory through to advanced training. Trainees who are not incumbent electricians have the opportunity to apply for an apprenticeship with IBEW, and the training makes it more likely that they will be accepted and succeed in the apprenticeship.

other

humboldt county workforce investment board

Eureka, California

SGA Type - Not a current ARRA grantee



Jacqueline Debets
jdebets@co.humboldt.ca.us

PROMISING PRACTICES

KEYS TO EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Employer Engagement & Data-Driven Decision Making

This abstract focuses specifically on the employer engagement practices of a high-performing workforce investment board representing California's primarily rural north Humboldt County. Although this WIB is not currently an ARRA grantee, it has secured several DOL and state grants over the years, including a major multi-million dollar award to help drive implementation of its industry based workforce and economic development efforts. In 2007, this WIB identified "targets of opportunity," clusters of industries that had demonstrated a long-term record of job (+37%), business (+23%), and/or wage growth (+20%). Instead of seeking out data about industries they liked, Humboldt let the data tell them which industries offered the greatest opportunity, and as a result, 3 three of the six targets were industries they had never considered before but demonstrated dramatic growth in the region.

To understand the data trends, Humboldt convened businesses in those target cluster areas, and worked with them to identify their opportunities for growth and a combination of workforce and economic development related actions that would help capitalize on those opportunities. The WIB has maintained relationships with many of these firms and reached out to many others. Over time, these employer relationships have helped stimulate actions and outcomes that have not only met immediate needs of the industries through workforce development and other actions, but also created a ripple effect through K-12, community colleges, and other institutions and systems that are critical to the long-term health of the industries and the residents who are working in those industries now or who could work for those industries in the future. These ripple effects are listed at the end of this abstract.

The key to achieving the immediate outcomes and ripple effects is the effective, long-term model for engaging employers—a set of practices that can help both ARRA and non-ARRA grantees and organizations in their work. The first operating principle for Humboldt County is to put its staff in the shoes of the business people they are targeting. Employers will not respond unless

they feel that the workforce system is providing some value to them, something that helps them address their immediate concerns. So, it is important to carefully craft agendas from the employer point of view. If their time is well-used, they will come back. Humboldt takes two initial steps to convene an industry group:

1. **Review the data and a complete list of employers** with their partners to identify a group of industry leaders that represent a cross-section of the industry. They look for new, cutting edge companies as well as long-standing businesses, and always people who play well together.
2. **Then they call each invitee and have a one-on-one conversation** about their business and the agenda of the meeting, usually including examples of how this has worked. Conversations are followed up with a draft agenda.

Although these individual conversations are critical to the employer engagement process, they are not a substitute for a group meeting, which creates a forum for exchange among employers and an opportunity to identify shared strategic priorities and specific projects on which to work collaboratively. The time and place for each meeting is set based on the most opportune time for that industry. For instance, they met with Building & Systems Construction leaders at 7am, and with Niche Manufacturers at 4pm. The meetings are facilitated so business leaders talk to each other about their strategic opportunities and challenges; staff takes notes, listens and asks questions to keep the meeting going in a constructive direction. The meeting agenda is always built around business opportunities and challenges facing the employer (not just workforce needs). Workforce and economic development needs and potential projects always surface.

In fact, Humboldt's experience has been that keeping the conversation at the strategic level is important, followed by being opportunistic about what specific action or project on which to work. The group meeting process must also be handled with care from a facilitation point of view. Humboldt's advice: do not play expert and preach to employers; ask one question at a time (don't flood

with multiple inquiries); do not “clutter” the meeting with a lot of process techniques and materials; give them time to talk to each other, not just to the facilitator; and give them something of value every time the facilitator convenes them (e.g., data on their industry, a speaker with useful information). Never ask them what the workforce system can do for them or what they can do for the convener. Ultimately, the process and the resulting work-plan should lay out what the industry will do for itself to maximize opportunities and overcome challenges.

Employer engagement is the key, not getting employer input or treating employers like customers or vendors. Employer engagement is about finding ways to work together for a shared outcome that creates shared value across multiple businesses and community partners. If workforce professionals talk about what is driving (or could drive) their growth, what assets and constraints there are, and how those might be overcome, then it will become clearer what public and non-profit sector resources and partnering could be useful in working with employers to address those challenges.

Employer engagement meetings held by the Humboldt WIB had lasting effects and created a platform for:

1. [Regional Collaboration](#)
2. [Stimulating education and training institutions to change](#) (e.g. College of the Redwoods)
3. [Engaging and connecting](#) businesses
4. [Developing](#) useful tools
5. [Evolving economic and workforce development](#) thinking

IDENTIFYING TARGETS AND OCCUPATIONS OF OPPORTUNITY BY PRESENTING DATA ANALYSIS TO EMPLOYERS

Data-Driven Decision Making & Employer Engagement

Humboldt WIB identified its “targets of opportunity” (targets) using NAICS codes and NETS data—a proprietary establishment database—to evaluate industries based on: growing quality (increases in wages), expanding opportunity (increases in jobs and firms), improving competitiveness (increases in the concentration of industry jobs in region compared to the state of California), and career potential (pathways for upward mobility). Based on this analysis, six targets were identified as sectors that would benefit from a region-wide effort to accelerate growth and success. These sectors have historically shown job growth resilience to the effects of short-term economic cycles and positive growth potential for the future. Identifying targets served as the jumping off point for engaging employers in each of the targets to collaborate in revealing specific areas of opportunity on which to focus efforts. The industries identified as targets include: Diversified Health Care; Building and Systems Construction and Maintenance; Specialty Agriculture, Food and Beverages; Investment Support Services; Management and Innovation Services; and Niche Manufacturing.

An extensive report summarized the analytical findings with profiles for each of the targets identifying: specific areas within each target; how jobs, wages and firms have changed over the last 15 years, and occupational patterns and career potentials.² Each target area profile also includes: key reasons for past growth, opportunities for future expansion, and workforce needs as identified by engaging employers during focus group meetings.

² To view this report, follow the link: <http://www.northcoastprosperity.com/local-economy/targets>

Presenting data analysis to a group of employers was significant in that it:

1. **Supported** anecdotal evidence
2. **Debunked** myths
3. **Far more compelling** than expected
4. **Foundation** for BIG thinking
 - **Sustained structural shift** in the regional economy
 - **Presented tremendous** opportunity
 - **Inspirational reason** to look forward

There were immediate impacts stemming from the employer engagement meeting and data analysis:

1. **Got into action right away** on a few projects that came up in focus groups
2. **Five new private sector CEO-types** stepped forward to be on the WIB the week after
3. **Moved the WIB beyond WIA-compliance** to engagement
4. **Launched follow-up** Occupations of Opportunities Project

Stemming from the analysis of target areas, Humboldt WIB took an in-depth look at the “occupations of opportunity” within each target area. Data from the analysis is based on employment and wage data from the Labor Market Information Division (LMID). A subsequent report was published in order to identify key occupations and career pathways within each of the target areas. This report highlights high-demand occupations, cross-industry patterns, replacement jobs, gateway skills required, gateway abilities required, and occupations across wage levels with similar educational requirements (transferability potential).³ Results showed that 28 of the 50 top growing jobs in the region are within the six targets.

The occupations report also includes an Occupations of Opportunity Search Tool. The tool is a valuable resource for vocational counselors, human resource managers, and other public users in identifying career progressions and cross-industry career progressions. Based on data analysis presented in the report, users are able to identify if they are in declining occupations in the region and from there discover occupations with higher wages in growing industries. The tool incorporates the use of O*NET to find out more information on occupations of interest such as the required skills, knowledge and abilities for that field. The tool requires three steps:

1. **Gain understanding** of occupational opportunities based on levels of education
2. **Select occupations** of interest
3. **Explore profiles** for your occupations of interest using O*NET

The tool is particularly useful in that it displays information on jobs that are in demand and educates users on the educational requirements needed to secure a job in a prospering occupational area.

CREATING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Sustainable Systems Change

Humboldt WIB is utilizing the action plans from their regional industry targets of opportunity work to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the county and to feed into the CEDS for each of the five counties in the region. They are working with a regional shared strategy with which each county is doing its local planning. This framework will facilitate collaborative efforts to meet common industry needs across the region. Several projects are under development or implementation in accordance with the cross-cluster work plan for the county and are supported by an investment strategy. Humboldt WIB links industry and community leaders to develop regional economic and workforce development plans and an investment strategy.

³ To view this report, follow the link: <http://www.northcoastprosperity.com/local-economy/occupations>

IMPROVING REGIONAL CAPACITY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN A QUALITY WORKFORCE

Partnership Building & Continuum of Participant Support

For high school and college youth, industry leaders are volunteering for advisory boards at local high schools, as well as Humboldt State University (HSU) and College of the Redwoods (CR) in order to increase the number of qualified graduates that meet industry-specific needs and to make sure that students know there are opportunities in the region. To increase the number of trades people in the region, they support vocational trades and applied academic learning at CR and in high schools. Humboldt WIB has also focused on target industries for their youth work-experience program.

BIOMASS UTILIZATION IN STATE AND FEDERAL GREEN ENERGY POLICY

Policy Alignment

As a part of the cross-cluster work plan, a policy position paper aimed at promoting the integration of thermal energy generation in state and federal policy energy policy was drafted. The paper was completed by Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) and the Coalition for Eastern Forests and Communities (CEFC). The paper cites specific recommendations for policy changes. The inclusion of thermal energy components in energy policy would allow further development of biomass-to-energy projects. Policy areas of concern relevant to biomass-to-energy projects include: issues of scale, efficiency, biomass supply and harvesting, environmental and socioeconomic impacts and investment and financing. Aligning policy in favor of these kinds of projects will increase the viability of biomass-to-energy and support economic health in rural communities through green job creation.

Other work to grow the market for biomass projects includes maintenance of an inventory of biomass projects and a comprehensive analysis of issues and opportunities related to biomass utilization. Additionally, businesses and HSU are working on product development and research in scaled biomass utilization.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Partnership Building & Sustainable Systems Change

Below are examples of the ripple effects that effective, long-term employer engagement can produce:

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- **Analyzed its entire curriculum** according to target industry, high/med/low wage job preparation and how low can be made into med/high wage
- **Developed new Master Plan for Education** around Targets of Opportunity
- **Building 13 new certificates and degrees** aligned with needs for workforce in Targets of Opportunity with \$2M grant from DOL that WIB wrote and manages
- **Hosted video conferences** for community college counselors on Targets of Opportunity

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

- **Private sector representatives** recruited from target industries
- **Business owners from target industries** speak at WIB meetings
- **Designed information for vocational counselors** to show clients careers in growing industries and the training needed
- **Trained vocational counselors** on a worksheet and how to use O*Net to build a career pathway in Targets of Opportunity. <http://www.mynextmove.org/> another good resource

K-12 EDUCATION

- **Presented target occupations** to teachers and school board high schools
- **Integrated Targets/Occupations** into curriculum in some high school English classes
- **Decade of Difference**, a 10-year K-12 initiative to build a ready, willing & able workforce, funded in part by education and economic development

