

March 16, 2016



## Notes from Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 14, Session 3

This was the third session of PLC Cycle 14 that will feature informal, 20-minute discussions with EPA EWDJT grantees, alumni, and interested stakeholders. The goals for this new cycle include:

- Highlighting EWDJT programs, and identifying successes and challenges
- Exploring proven strategies and activities used by established EWDJT programs
- Discovering resources and leveraging opportunities
- Helpful hints and open discussion

Topics: 1. News from Washington and HMTRI  
2. Questions  
3. Florida State College at Jacksonville  
4. Making connections and networking  
5. Opportunities

### **News from Washington and HMTRI**

EWDJT proposals are in their ranking criteria review stage. Reviews appear to be on schedule with funding announcements in May.

Reminder—Brief your partners on the status of your proposal. Those noted in the proposal may be contacted by reviewers. The next request for new 2017 proposals is only 8 months away. Keep your team together.

### 2016 Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting

August 17–18, 2016

PLC participants are invited to the Annual All-Grantee Meeting to be held August 17–18, 2016. Hotel and meeting fees are provided. Participants must cover travel and meal expenses.

This meeting is a networking and learning event attended by the following participants:

- Current EPA-funded Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grantees
- Past EWDJT grantees
- PLC members
- EPA regional workforce development coordinators
- EPA headquarters staff

See section **#4. Making connections and networking** for more information.

### **#2. Questions**

*Can you provide me with the PLC schedule for the rest of this cycle?*

The PLC meets every other week during an active cycle. All sessions are held on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. EDT. The remaining sessions in this cycle will be held March 30, April 13, April 27, May 11, May 25, June 8, and June 22. The Annual All-Grantee Meeting will be held August 17–18.

### **#3. Florida State College at Jacksonville**

Using tablets to deliver digital instruction

Thank you, Jorge Gutierrez, for your presentation.

Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ) received their first EPA cooperative agreement under the ARRA stimulus program in 2009. They have successfully competed again in 2011, 2013, and 2015.

FSCJ combines has an excellent record of student retention and graduate placement utilizing 22 instructional modules delivered with S4 Samsung Galaxy 7" Tablets.

#### Program overview

The FSCJ training center is located in urban Jacksonville near the bus station for local transportation.

#### Target recruitment priorities

- FSCJ is focused on unemployed and underemployed individuals living in targeted urban areas throughout Jacksonville. Emphasis is placed on recruiting the following applicants:
  - Ex-offenders
  - Veterans
  - Single mothers
  - Homeless
  - Low-income
  - Minority
  - Displaced workers

#### Key partners

- City of Jacksonville Division of Military Affairs
- Veteran's and Disabled Services
- FSCJ Foundation—provides a \$2,500 award to an outstanding graduate
- CareerSource
- Jacksonville Housing Authority
- FSCJ Student Services
- Florida Brownfields Association
- City of Jacksonville
- Goodwill Job Junction
- The WorkSource
- Several environmental and associated contractors
- Local community-based organizations.

#### Training and placement goals

- 40–60 students per year
- 15–20 students per cohort, 2–3 cohorts per year
- Previous placements range from 75–85% placement

#### Core training program

- To accommodate underemployed participants, FSCJ holds class 4 nights each week from 5:00–10:00 p.m. for 16 weeks.

- A total of 18 state and federal certifications are offered
- Students receive tablets with all certifications displayed
  - OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120: 40-hour HAZWOPER
  - Florida DEP Stormwater, Erosion, Sedimentation Control Inspector
  - OSHA Disaster Site Worker
  - Environmental Sampling & Analysis
  - OSHA Construction Safety
  - OSHA General Industry Certification
  - OSHA Maritime Industry
  - FEMA: National Incident Management System (NIMS) IS-00700.a Certificate
  - FEMA: Introduction to Incident Command System IS100 Certificate
  - EPA 24-hour Hazardous Material Technician
  - Collections and Waste Water Training
  - Asbestos Worker Certification
  - EPA Lead Renovator, Repair & Paint (RRP)
  - American Red Cross First Aid, CPR & AED
  - OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens
  - Integrated Pest Management

#### Awareness training

- Environmental Justice Overview
- Solid Waste: Deconstruction & Recycling, Green Remediation Technologies
- Environmental Math & Chemical Safety
- OSHA Confined Space Entry
- Green Technology Industry: Urban Agriculture
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST)

#### Training and delivery

- FSCJ has developed 22 instructional modules delivered with Samsung Galaxy S4 7-inch tablets.
- The discontinued Nook tablets have been replaced by Galaxy S4 which can be purchased for around \$130. They have 8 gigs of memory, a USB port, memory slot, reads multiple formats, and has a long battery life. These devices are WiFi-enabled and work well with WISER. WISER (<https://wiser.nlm.nih.gov/>) is a United States National Library of Medicine system designed to assist emergency responders in hazardous material incidents. WISER provides a wide range of information on hazardous materials.
- Tablets with content and reference materials are provided to each student via pdf format. On completion of the program, graduates keep their tablets for communications, EWDJT news, updated reference materials and tracking. Devices are not insured. The program keeps extras (just in case) for instructors and staff. Loss rates do not justify the cost of the insurance.
- Jorge likes this approach to training and has been pleased with tablet performance, student acceptance, and results. Unexpected benefits have included enhanced student and graduate communication and tracking.

#### Student services and retention

- FSCJ has an excellent retention rate. High retention rates may be attributed to:
  - The FSCJ Foundation provides a \$2,500 award to an outstanding EWDJT program graduate.

- In addition to incentives associated with tablets, Veterans are able to receive benefits from local Veteran's organizations including the city of Jacksonville Division of Military Affairs and Veteran's Disabled Services.
- FSCJ Student Services offers support to EWDJT program participants. Jorge previously worked with the WIB and is aware and leverages benefits available to EWDJT participants.
- An articulation agreement with FSCJ provides college credit in their environmental AA program.
- Motivational and life skills discussions are inserted into the curriculum. This approach breaks up technical discussions and provides a foundation for retention and placement.
- FSCJ has many applicants with diverse backgrounds and skills. Multiple filtering techniques are used to find the best candidates.

#### Student recruitment

- FSCJ's EWDJT program recruits inner city unemployed and disadvantaged residents. However, an intensive screening process is used including considerable face-to-face interaction.
- TABE is not the primary criteria for acceptance into the program. A TABE result at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in math and reading is desirable but not a requirement. Equally important are:
  - Applicants must fill out a detailed, lengthy application. Those not interested are filtered quickly.
  - Orientation for potential applicants.
  - Panel interviews.
  - Medical screening for SCBA.
  - Driver's license required.
  - One-on-one, face-to-face personal interviews.
  - Applicants must be willing to travel out of state.
  - Drug-free, with on-the-spot drug testing of serious applicants.
  - Final selection based on applicant motivation and staff consensus of success in the program.

#### Participant prerequisites

- Unemployed or underemployed
- 18 years of age or older
- High school diploma or high school equivalency certification
- Physically fit and able to lift at least 30 pounds
- Able to work in confined areas (not claustrophobic)
- Must consent to a drug urinalysis test
- Take the adult basic education (T.A.B.E)
- Consent to a criminal background check

Application information is included as part of the recruitment process. Expectations are communicated before the application process begins. (From the EWDJT recruitment brochure.)

- Step 1: Complete and submit the application and provide copies of required identification listed in the application for screening.
- Step 2: Attend a scheduled mandatory Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training Orientation and information session.
- Step 3: Attend a scheduled interview process with the Environmental Training Team.

- Step 4: Take a Test for Adult Basic Education.
- Step 5: If you do not pass the Test for Adult Basic Education, you may attend remedial education and reapply for future classes.
- Step 6: Pass the Test for Adult Basic Education.
- Step 7: Pass a drug urinalysis screening.
- Step 8: Upon completion of the previous steps, you will have a final interview process and be notified if selected for the next available course.

#### Job placement

- FSCJ has a 75–85 percent placement rate.
- Tablets are used to send emails to students and graduates.
- Job leads and announcements are sent to program participants and graduates via email and social media.
- FSCJ has a relationship with the Florida Brownfields Association. In the past, graduates have been sent to the Annual Conference for introductions and discussions with potential employers. (Later in these notes is an announcement of this year's meeting.)

Contact Jorge for additional information at:

Jorge Gutierrez

Florida State College at Jacksonville

601 W. State Street

Jacksonville, FL 32202

Phone: 904.633.5976

[j.a.gutierrez@fscj.edu](mailto:j.a.gutierrez@fscj.edu)

#### **#4. Making connections and networking**

##### 2016 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting

August 17–18, 2016

Travel days: August 16 and August 19

Holiday Inn & Suites

Alexandria, VA 22314

The *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* is a networking and break-out event attended by:

- Current EPA-funded Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grantees
- Past EWDJT grantees
- PLC members
- EPA regional workforce development coordinators
- EPA headquarters staff

Reservation deadline is Tuesday, July 26, 2016. For additional information or questions contact Glo Hanne at [gghanne@eicc.edu](mailto:gghanne@eicc.edu).

##### Second Southeast Brownfields Conference

Save the date: October 16–19, 2016

Omni Downtown Hotel, Jacksonville, FL

Event hosted and organized by the Florida Brownfields Association with regional partners.

### The Annual Great Environmental Safety Training (GreatEST) Institute

June 6–17, 2016, in Davenport, Iowa

The annual Great Environmental Safety Training (GreatEST) Institute is a 10-day train-the-trainer program that delivers the required certifications for public and private responders and workers including:

- 40-Hour Waste Site Worker Health and Safety
- 24-Hour Industrial Emergency Response
- DOT HazMat
- Hazard Awareness and Communication

Participants must apply and be approved to attend this training sponsored under an NIEHS grant to the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE). The deadline to submit your application is February 29, 2016. For more information, contact Patti Thompson at [pattijthompson@gmail.com](mailto:pattijthompson@gmail.com).

### 2016 Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference

June 6, 2016

Cleveland, Ohio

Registration is now open for the 2016 Good Jobs, Green Jobs conference. The conference is about investing in America. Good Jobs, Green Jobs affords an opportunity to join with labor, environmental, business, and community leaders to forge the links between the economic possibilities created through protecting the environment and solving climate change.

Early registration is open (\$199) at <http://www.greenjobsconference.org>.

### Annual Georgia Environmental Conference

August 24–26, 2016

Jekyll Island, Georgia

In its 11th year, the Annual Georgia Environmental Conference is the state's largest, most comprehensive and diverse educational opportunity. The conference will be attended by over 700 local, state, and federal government officials, business and industry leaders, attorneys, consultants, engineers, developers, land owners, architects, agribusiness leaders, energy experts, water planning districts, universities, public health officials, solid waste, enviro-tech, recycling experts, and many, many others with a strong interest in environmental activities in Georgia and the Southeast region.

To learn more, go to <http://www.georgiaenet.com>.

## **5. Opportunities**

### Local Environmental Education (EE) Grants

Local EE grants are a great addition to EWDJT program activities. The program funds many small grants and tend to be less competitive and easier to get than larger federal grants.

Under the Environmental Education Grants Program, EPA seeks grant proposals from eligible applicants to support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques. Since 1992, EPA has distributed between \$2 and \$3.5 million in grant funding per year, supporting more than 3,600 grants.

Applicants must represent one of the following types of organizations to be eligible for an environmental education grant:

- Local education agency
- State education or environmental agency
- Colleges or universities
- Non-profit organization
- Noncommercial educational broadcasting entity
- Tribal education agency

Applications are due April 8, 2016.

For more information, visit <http://www.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grant-solicitation-notice>.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Next PLC Session:        March 30, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. EST  
Please call in five minutes early.

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at [msenew@aol.com](mailto:msenew@aol.com).



Visit our *HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs. All PLC session notes and recordings are also located on the *Brownfields Toolbox* website at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Glo Hanne at [ghanne@eicc.edu](mailto:ghanne@eicc.edu).

**NOTE:** The PLC brings together ideas and opinions of individuals interested in environmental workforce development and training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA, its policy or opinions and should not be taken as official guidance.