

July 15, 2015



Notes from Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 13, Session 3

This was the third session in a new cycle of Professional Learning Community conversations. During this cycle, we will focus on the following themes:

- Establishing Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) Programs
- Peer-to-peer mentoring and idea exchange
- Discovering resources for enhancing EWDJT programs
- Helpful hints and open discussion

Topics: News from Washington and HMTRI

City of Detroit—Partnering and Coordinating with Local Governmental Agencies

Networking

Items of Interest

News from Washington and HMTRI

Estimated target dates for the next round of EWDJT Request for Proposals (RFP) is November. Note: administrative delays may delay this date. Those interested in submitting a proposal need to start now as many ranking criteria require collaboration and partnership development. A good starting point for new communities not familiar with the EPA EWDJT program is to obtain a copy of the FY2015 RFP. The RFP is available on EPA's website or request one from Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com. Note that the 2016 solicitation may have provisions not included in previous RFPs. While the basic requirements of the 2016 guidelines are likely to remain the same, organizations considering submitting proposals need to familiarize themselves with changes in evaluation criteria when it is issued.

August and September are highlighted by two major workshops of interest to EWDJT grantees and PLC members:

1. The *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting*, August 19–20, Alexandria, VA
2. The 2015 National Brownfields Training Conference, September 2–4, Chicago, IL

See below for additional information for both events.

City of Detroit—Partnering and Coordinating with Local Governmental Agencies

Thank you, Jessica Carr, Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation, for your informative presentation.

The city of Detroit was awarded their EWDJT grant in 2014. Their program stands out as an excellent example of city government partnering and coordinating with local governmental agencies.

LaReina Wheeler is with the city of Detroit and works with Raymond Scott, General Manager of Detroit's Department Buildings Safety Engineering and Environment. Jessica Carr works with the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC). DESC is a key partner in Detroit's EWDJT program. Together, they demonstrate how partnership relationships with local workforce boards can facilitate recruitment, training, and placement of program participants.

DESC provided services to over 32,000 jobseekers and 1,700 Detroit businesses last year. Through partnerships with community-based and faith-based organizations, foundations, and many others, DESC provides employers with access to the broadest talent pool in Detroit.

DESC has about 30 locations that are strategically positioned throughout Detroit to service residents and provide a knowledgeable workforce to employers. With the EPA cooperative agreement, DESC has integrated environmental workforce training into its offerings providing the EWDJT program with leveraged recruitment, screening, student transportation and assistance, training, and placement.

Overview of Detroit's EWDJT program

Commitment to train and place

In their proposal to EPA, Detroit committed to train 50 students and place 35 graduates in environmental jobs. During the first year of operation, Detroit completed two cohorts and trained 33 students, exceeding expectations, with starting salaries ranging from \$11 to \$18 per hour.

The core training program is based on employer and community needs associated with deconstruction and reconstruction.

- 40-hour HAZWOPER
- Asbestos abatement
- Lead abatement
- CPR
- National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) training
- Job readiness training
- Three federal or state certifications

Target recruitment population

With DESC, Detroit is targeting unemployed and underemployed city residents, particularly veterans, minorities, and individuals who lost their jobs due to manufacturing plant closures.

Key partners

- Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC)
- Sierra Club
- United Community Housing Coalition
- Detroit Future City
- ESK Services, Inc.
- Metro Occupational Trainers, Inc.
- Numerous community-based organizations and environmental employers

Recruitment

Detroit's EWDJT program relies on DESC for recruitment and screening services. Minimum requirements include a 6th grade reading and math aptitude. Potential participants must demonstrate an interest in environmental remediation. The program currently has a waiting list of applicants. Those not accepted are encouraged to reapply or are redirected to other programs.

Placement

To date, two cohorts of training have been completed with a total of 33 students trained. Starting salaries range from \$11 to \$18 per hour. Over five employers have committed to hiring certified graduates.

Unexpected issues associated with training and placement

Noteworthy to other EWDJT programs: An unexpected issue in training and placement became the “lag time” required to be issued licenses. Remediation certifications have taken 3-4 weeks to process causing unexpected employment delays for program graduates.

The city of Detroit’s EWDJT program provides an excellent example of a city program that has been able to coordinate and leverage existing state and local programs to offer environmental workforce development and job training to unemployed city residents.

If you have additional questions Jessica’s presentation, please contact her at:

Jessica Carr

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440 E. Congress

Detroit, MI 48226

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Networking

2015 All-Grantee Meeting – PLC members also invited

The 2015 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting will be held Wednesday–Thursday, August 19-20, 2015 with travel days of August 18 and August 21 in Alexandria, VA. Participants must assume costs of transportation and some meals.

This meeting is open to:

- EPA-funded Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grantees
- Past EWDJT grantees
- PLC members

The 2015 Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting will be held as follows:

Wednesday–Thursday, August 19-20, 2015

8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. each day

August 18 and August 21 are travel days

Location: Holiday Inn & Suites Alexandria Historic District, 625 First Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Check-in will be Tuesday, August 18, from 6–8 p.m. This is check-in only and to receive meeting materials. No meeting will be held on Tuesday evening so that everyone can get settled after a long day of travel.

To register, email Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu and include your name, organization, address, city/state/zip, phone, fax, and EWDJT program you are representing or if you are a PLC participant.

The registration deadline is **TUESDAY, JULY 29**. If you have any questions, please contact Glo at the email address above or by phone at 563.441.4081.

2015 National Brownfields Training Conference

For those interested in this important conference, the 2015 National Brownfields Training Conference will be held in Chicago, IL, September 2–4, 2015. The Conference will be held at the Chicago Hilton on Michigan Ave. Find out more about the conference and register at www.brownfieldsconference.org.

Please don't forget to register for the EJ Caucus if you plan on attending and haven't done so already. There is no registration fee but they need to know how many will attend for food planning purposes. Here is the website to register:

http://www.brownfieldsconference.org/en/activities/environmental_justice_caucus

HMTRI will have an exhibition booth that grantees are invited to use as a meeting spot and a place to distribute program materials. Grantees are welcome to drop off brochures and handouts for distribution.

As part of the National Brownfields Training Conference, events to consider include the following:

The EJ Caucus

If you plan on attending the Environmental Justice Caucus and haven't done so already, there is not a registration fee but they are trying to gain a better sense of how many will attend for food planning purposes. Here is the website to register:

http://www.brownfieldsconference.org/en/activities/environmental_justice_caucus

Equitable Development Workshop

September 1, 9:00 am–3:00 pm

Equitable development seeks to comprehensively address deeply entrenched issues such as poverty, economic development, and environmental quality within our communities. Economic opportunity is a cornerstone of equitable development particularly within communities facing the additional challenges associated with brownfields sites. Where there are opportunities to clean up and sustainably re-use brownfields sites, the timing is ripe to integrate and invest in equitable development. It involves residents, property owners, workers, local businesses, planners, government officials and developers cooperatively engaging in decisions and investments which address past inequities, while creating a new vision for a sustainable future. The foundation for creating strong, economically resilient and live able communities is increasingly built upon a spectrum of place-based activities that develop improved community revitalization tools and strategies. This workshop is designed to give participants practical tools, learning from practitioners working at the cutting edge of connecting low income and minority populations to opportunities and the beneficial socioeconomic outcomes of sustainable brownfields redevelopment.

Roundtable group discussion, *Establishing Effective Workforce Development Programs for Brownfields Redevelopment* from 11:20am-11:55am.

HMTRI will introduce the 9:50 –10:25 am panel for the session *Brownfields Environmental Employment and Education: Targeting Low Income, Unemployed and Under-Employed Workers*, and facilitate the discussion afterwards from 10:25am-10:40am.

Making a Visible Difference in Communities

Joe Bruss, U.S. EPA Headquarters

Sharon Beard, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)

Robert Baumann, College of the Holy Cross

Disadvantaged communities affected by brownfields and other sources of pollution have struggled to revitalize neighborhoods to make them healthy, safe, livable, and sustainable. The NIEHS Environmental Career Worker Training Program (ECWTP) and the EPA's Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) Program have addressed this by providing grant funding to support training and creating career pathways to the environmental field. This session will provide organizations with strategies via roundtables for effectively implementing and evaluating programs, developing approaches to serve specific high-risk populations, such as ex-offenders, and summarize the recent findings of an Economic Impact Analysis of the NIEHS ECWTP.

Town Hall Meeting

Vernice Miller-Travis, Skeo Solutions

Deeohn Ferris, Sustainable Community Development Group Inc.

Mathy Stanislaus, U.S. EPA, Assistant Administrator for Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

Twenty years after the EPA awarded its first assessment grant to Cuyahoga County; the EPA's Brownfields Program has awarded thousands of grant awards to communities throughout the country to support assessment, cleanup, revolving loan fund, job training, technical assistance, and area-wide planning. The Brownfields Program was designed to specifically address environmental justice concerns. This session is intended to provide an opportunity for open dialogue with community stakeholders and environmental justice leaders to solicit feedback on what additional steps need to be taken, what are the areas of improvement, and what programs have been successful and should be highlighted in order to lay the framework for the next era of brownfields revitalization.

OAI gathering and Open House, Friday September 4, 2015 from 2:30–4:00 pm

OAI cordially invites you to join us for a gathering of workforce development agencies and colleagues, directly following the 2015 Brownfields conference on Friday September 4, 2015 from 2:30 – 4:00 pm. OAI is pleased to host this event at our new facility, located in downtown Chicago at 180 N Wabash, Suite 750, Chicago, IL 60601. This event is meant to share tools and best practices between organizations. OAI will present a workshop about our latest curriculum innovations including our efforts to include a blended learning approach to the Environmental Careers Worker Training program. We will make sure that our presentation includes useful resources/ takeaways for all attendees and their respective programs. We are looking for 3–4 additional presenters from partner organizations to share their best practices as well. Please RSVP to: mdowling@oaiinc.org by Friday August 28, 2015.

Annual Georgia Environmental Conference

The Annual Georgia Environmental Conference is the state's largest, most comprehensive and diverse educational opportunity. Over the four-day event, this conference will host an elite group of environmental professionals seeking to exchange knowledge and share ideas around environmental concerns in Georgia and across the Southeast region. The curriculum offers 56 unique courses, allowing attendees to design their own personalized curriculum by selecting ten (10) educational breakout sessions.

This year's conference will be held at the LEED Certified Jekyll Island Convention Center. The registration fee is \$350 for those who register on or before July 15, 2015. After July 15, the fee is \$450. The

Government, University, and Nonprofit (GUN) registration fee is \$300, and the student registration fee is \$150.

www.georgiaenr.com/registration-information

Items of Interest

The Corps Network

Established in 1985, The Corps Network is the voice of the nation's 151 Service and Conservation Corps. Currently operating in every state and the District of Columbia, Corps annually enrolls more than 30,000 young men and women in service. Corps annually mobilizes approximately 289,000 community volunteers who in conjunction with Corps members generate 13.5 million hours of service every year. For more information visit www.corpsnetwork.org

Reminder

To access the *Brownfields Toolbox* website go to www.brownfields-toolbox.org. Those interested in providing content or suggestions are encouraged to contact Glo Hanne at ghanne@eicc.edu.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: July 29, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. EST

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

Visit our *HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at

<http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs. All PLC session notes and recordings are also located on the *Brownfields Toolbox* website at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>.



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.