

September 15, 2010

Notes from Brownfields Job Training Professional Learning Community (PLC) Session #28

Session leader: Mike Senew

Topic: Goals and Objectives for this Cycle of the Brownfields Professional Learning Community

NOTES FROM SESSION 28

This was the first meeting for Cycle 3 Brownfields Professional Learning Community (PLC). The goals for this cycle are:

1. Conference call meetings held every other Wednesday at 2pm EDT.
2. Meetings limited to 30 minutes.
3. Friends & guests are invited (email msenew@aol.com if you wish to be removed from the PLC list) to receive notes and meeting reminders. Likewise, if you are not on the list and wish to be included, send an email with your contact information.
4. Topics are determined by participant interests.
5. The first few PLC meetings will examine and feature general aspects and operation of successful Brownfields Jobs Training programs.
6. Later sessions will focus on specific components of successful programs.

A special conference call session will be held to review and discuss criteria used in the evaluation and award of EPA's upcoming request for proposals (RFP) to receive FY11 EPA job development and training funds. EPA expects to issue the RFP in October with a due date in January 2011. Cycle 3 PLC meetings will examine successful strategies for implementation of each criteria noted in the EPA guidelines.

Thank you for contributions this week from **Tim Boul – St. Louis Community College**.

Tim described his program and opportunities for environmental job development in the St. Louis area. Tim's core curriculum consists of the certifications listed below. Note that some of the certifications are governed by federal regulation. Reference to the federal regulation appears next to the certification.

In general, the responsibility for implementing the regulation and certification is by the state if the state accepts authority. In cases where states do not accept responsibility for enforcing certifications, the federal government retains authority over training and certification.

A good "rule of thumb" is that your state has authority over certification and training. Check with state officials first. If they have not accepted authority, training and certification falls back to the federal government. The reason this is a good approach lies with the issue that many states have, because of local issues, more stringent requirements than those set forth in federal regulations. However, in no case can a state have less stringent regulations.

St. Louis Core Curriculum and Certification offerings

- OSHA – 40-Hour Hazardous Waste and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) (29CFR 1910.120(e) – A required certification for all Brownfields Job Training grantees

- OSHA – 10-Hour Construction Industry Outreach Training (49 CFR 172.704)
- EPA – Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RR&P) (40 CFR 745.85)
- EPA – Asbestos (40 CFR Part 763 pt c-e)
- EPA – Lead Worker (multiple regulations also linked to RR&P)
- Weatherization – regulations for training & certification in progress

This core curriculum was designed based on a local needs assessment indicating the predominance of lead-based paint used in older buildings that are now being deconstructed or renovated in the St. Louis area. (In later sessions, the PLC will examine the importance of comprehensive needs assessments prior to the development of a job training program.)

In St. Louis, training is performed by certified instructors from the local college. An important point here is that program managers do not have to be environmental experts to run successful programs. Good management is needed, with strong organizational, people, and outreach skills. Technical and training capabilities can be provided with strong community partnerships.

Regarding student recruitment, students are carefully screened with several one-on-one personal interviews to ensure participants will be able to complete the challenging program. Seventy to one hundred applicants may be screened during recruitment with 15 students accepted for each program cycle. Finding qualified applicants is not an issue...finding good jobs is the challenge.

It is important to remember:

- Your ability to place graduates in jobs relies on the quality of your students.
- The reputation of your program relies on the performance of your placements.
- Your ability to recruit relies on your reputation and the success of your placements.
- Your good reputation will bring you more applicants than open training “slots.”

The bottom line is...

Be extremely careful in selecting program participants.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: September 29, 2010
 2:00pm EDT

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