

**National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
ARRA Investments in WORKER TRAINING (WTP)**

**Public Health Burden**

Occupational disease, injuries and accidents continue to make many workplaces a dangerous place to work. Each year substantial numbers of workers experience new and repeated occupational and environmental exposures that are attributed to workplace place. Generally, there is a lack of strong, participatory, job specific health and safety training of workers responding to hazardous materials, waste and emergency response activities. To successfully prevent injuries and illnesses, targeted training is essential to an effective occupational health program.

**Training Activities**

The major objective of the NIEHS WTP is to prevent work related harm by assisting in the training of workers in how best to protect themselves and their communities from exposure to hazardous materials encountered during hazardous waste operations, hazardous materials transportation, environmental restoration of contaminated facilities or chemical emergency response. A variety of ARRA funded cooperative agreements are hiring staff and offering new and innovative training programs to workers to address the issue of worker training and protection. A few include:

- Lakeshore Technical College, WI, part of the Midwest Consortium headed by the University of Cincinnati, has begun conducting training for their target audience, including a 40 Hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (Hazwoper) class for 10 participants. In addition, the Midwest Consortium are training local workers who are unemployed or underemployed to conduct weatherization activities in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin.<sup>1</sup>
- The International Chemical Workers Union (ICWU) and its consortium partner the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) targeted underserved populations to assist them to gain employment in remediation and hazardous waste industries. The ICWU held their ARRA kickoff and organizing meeting in Cincinnati in September bringing together their site coordinators from their Chicago IL, Anniston AL, and Oakland CA to review project goals and requirements, and to design specific implementation activities and timelines. The first trainings are now set to begin at the Cypress Mandela Center in Oakland CA in November.<sup>2</sup>
- The New Jersey/New York Hazardous Materials Worker Training Center, based at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, are expanding their training by targeting workers in various hazardous waste areas especially those who will be engaged in cleaning up newly funded ARRA Superfund sites in New York and New Jersey. The scope of work includes hazardous waste clean-up and green jobs initiatives under the Hazardous Waste Worker Training (HWWT) and the Minority Worker Training (MWT) Programs.<sup>3</sup>
- The International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) working collaboratively with various contractors are providing required worker safety and health training for workers who are employed on ARRA funded hazardous waste cleanup projects and large scale construction projects.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 3 U45 ES006184-18S1-- Worker Health and Safety Training Cooperative Agreement –Rice, Carol

<sup>2</sup> 3U45ES006162-18S1-- Worker Health and Safety Training Cooperative Agreement – Cyphers, Frank

<sup>3</sup> 3U45ES006179-18S1--Worker Health and Safety Training Cooperative Agreement – Gotsch, Audrey

<sup>4</sup> 3U45ES014084-05S1 -- Worker Health and Safety Training Cooperative Agreement –Bryd, Lamont

### **Green Jobs, Energy, and Minority Worker Training Focus**

During the past several years, the movement towards a “greener” economy has greatly expanded offering new opportunities for all workers but particularly for those unemployed or underemployed. NIEHS WETP has documented the need for safety and health training in the emerging green sector including the areas of commercial and residential weatherization, alternative energy development, green remediation, green construction and emerging industries like nanotechnology. Some of these ARRA projects include:

- The Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA) Training and Education Fund formally the Laborers-AGC Education and Training Fund strategically expanded their current HWWT Program to meet the needs of the emerging weatherization and sustainable construction workforce. They are targeting the thousands of workers who are now being retrained to work in areas such as Weatherization Installer/Technician, Weatherization Supervisor, and Energy Auditor. Recently, three Weatherization programs were developed. The programs consisted of a participant guide for trainees to use in the classroom and take home and an Instructor guide which directs the facilitator through the courses. The development process for these programs required the hiring of writers, editors, publishing assistants and subject matter experts.
- The Center for Construction Research and Training (formerly the Center to Protect Workers Rights) are delivering training for green construction jobs, including weatherization and alternative energy sources. This includes a train the trainer program to conduct energy audits using the Insulation Energy Appraisal Certification Program (IEAP). This trainer program will teach their workers how to conduct energy appraisals of existing buildings, work that will be critical as older buildings are weatherized. Under the Minority Worker Training Program, they are expanding their comprehensive environmental and construction training for under-represented workers in four communities including New Orleans, LA; St. Paul, MN; Los Angeles and East Palo Alto, CA to train and employ workers in the green construction, wind turbine, and photovoltaic industries. 20 students are currently enrolled in the New Orleans program where a new curriculum for a 40-hour introduction to green building and weatherization training is being piloted to be completed in late November.<sup>5</sup>

### **Small Business Innovation and Research**

Under the WTP SBIR Program, supplemental awards were made to grantees that developed appropriate e-learning applications, tools and resources through a variety of different media to support the transfer and dissemination of safety and health information and training materials that can support the broad ARRA goals of creating and assuring safe and healthy jobs. Two of those ARRA grants include:

- BandeMar Networks provided high school and college undergraduate students with hands-on experience with state-of-the-art health training and research translation technologies.<sup>6</sup>
- MetaMedia Training International, Inc. is developing additional lessons and scenarios for the parent grant’s “HazMatIQ Four Step System eLearning” program that assists in the training of firefighters. They will hire an additional graphic designer/programmer to assist in course development.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> 3 U45 ES006185-19S1 -- Worker Health and Safety Training Cooperative Agreement – Stafford, Erich J

<sup>6</sup> 1 3R44ES014793-02S1 -- Mobile Just-In-Time Training of Emergency Response Personnel– Bandera, Cesar

<sup>7</sup> 1 3R44ES016670-02S1 -- HazMatIQ Four Step System eLearning -- Held, Christopher