

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY CAMPAIGN

Investing in Women to Build a Better Future for All

Creating Opportunity for Low-Income Women in the Green Economy

*Report by
Women's Economic Security Campaign
in conjunction with
Wider Opportunities for Women*



About the Women's Economic Security Campaign

The Women's Economic Security Campaign (WESC) uses the power and resources of women's funds across the country to increase opportunity for low-income women and their families. We strive to elevate the voices of women's foundations to ensure that the problems faced by women living in poverty and their families are at the center of efforts to fix our nation's economy and create opportunity for all U.S. residents. Our tools include public policy, advocacy, public education and grant making to organizations that work to eliminate poverty by supporting women struggling to overcome economic insecurity.

WESC was launched through the combined efforts and leadership of four regionally diverse women's funds – Chicago Foundation for Women, Washington Area Women's Foundation, the Women's Foundation of California and the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis. Working in collaboration with the Women's Funding Network, we seek to harness the voice and power of women's foundations nationwide to improve the lives of low-income women. Women's funds have invested nearly \$500 million over the last 20 years and have more than \$456 million in collective working assets.

Women's funds collectively invest in women-led solutions to systemic root causes of poverty. We have worked to improve women's economic security through both local outreach and longer-term policy change on issues such as paid sick leave, pay equity and quality child care. Through our extensive connections as community leaders and funders, we have the ability to bring together experts and advocates from across the political spectrum. Together, we intend to reframe the debate on improving our nation's economy to include greater support for programs and policies that create opportunity for low-income women and their children.

About Wider Opportunities for Women

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally and in its home community of Washington, D.C. to build pathways to economic independence for America's families, women and girls. WOW has a distinctive history in changing the landscape of women and work.

For more than 40 years, WOW has helped women learn to earn, with programs emphasizing literacy, technical and nontraditional skills, the welfare-to-work transition, career development, and retirement security. Since 1964, WOW has trained more than 10,000 women for well-paid work in the DC area.

Today, WOW addresses economic security across generations. WOW leads the Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Project (FESS), the Elder Economic Security Initiative and the Building Bridges to Economic Security Campaign. WOW has been a leader in promoting women in the green economy.

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**WOMEN'S ECONOMIC
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Introduction: Women and Employment — A Key to National Economic Security

In 2008, about 56 percent of America's 39.8 million people living in poverty were female. Of the nation's 13.5 million children living in poverty, 8.5 million were being raised in single-parent households—89.7 percent of which were headed by women.¹ The Women's Economic Security Campaign believes that any comprehensive effort to help these women move out of poverty needs to start with jobs. While there are a number of factors that need to be addressed, secure stable employment with good wages, benefits and opportunity for advancement are vital if low-income women with children are to gain long-term economic security. Thus, we start our Campaign with a focus on employment.

Women and work²

- Women's participation in the labor force has increased from just over 42 percent of working-age women in 1970 to more than 60 percent in 2009.
- Six out of ten mothers with children younger than 18 work.
- One-fifth of all families with children are headed by working single mothers.
- In September 2009, more than 1.1 million working-age female heads of household wanted a job but could not find one.
- Women are historically more likely to experience employment disruption, with 52 percent of women compared with 16 percent of men projected to spend a complete calendar year without earnings at some point during the next 15 years.

Good jobs for women are not only critical for family economic stability; they are a key component of lasting economic recovery for our nation.

When women work it is often for low wages³

- Ninety percent of working-age adults who work full-time but earn less than \$15,000 a year are women.
- In 2008, women who worked full-time year-round earned only 77 cents for every dollar earned by full-time, year-round male workers. That means families relying solely on women's earnings face greater hardship.
- Between 2007 and 2008, the incomes of women fell by 1.9 percent while men's incomes fell by 1 percent.
- In 2008, 37.2 percent of female-headed families with children were living in poverty compared with just 8 percent of families with both parents in the home and 14 percent of male-headed households.

Good jobs for women are not only critical for family economic stability; they are a key component of lasting economic recovery for our nation.

Focus on Green Jobs

As the unemployment rate has continued to rise, the emerging green sector holds out potential opportunity for millions of U.S. residents. Public and private entities have contributed to the growth of the sector. Those efforts received a major boost from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), which provided an influx of new funds for green jobs. This offers an unprecedented opportunity to educate and train a diverse set of workers, including women, to benefit from the developing green economy.

While these new funding sources could open up employment options for those struggling in the current economy, challenges exist and much work remains to be done for public, private and philanthropic partners to ensure that women can train for, be placed in, and retain green jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and benefits.

Creating Opportunity for Low-Income Women in the Green Economy highlights green job opportunities, identifies barriers to women in accessing those jobs and provides recommendations for policymakers and philanthropy. Key findings include:

- Green jobs, many with good wages and benefits, are being created throughout the country.
- Many of the industries that are creating green jobs, such as the construction trades, have historically had low female representation.
- New federal and state funding provides an ideal opportunity to address the barriers faced by women in securing green jobs and earning higher wages.
- Shifting the current paradigm of women's under-representation in most green job occupations will require policy and programs that make the inclusion of women a priority.
- It is important to ensure that the positions available to women in the green sector are quality jobs that will help them move their families out of poverty.

Creating Opportunity for Low-Income Women in the Green Economy is the first in a series of policy briefs to be developed by the Women's Economic Security Campaign. Future briefs will focus on policy debates during the coming year that could dramatically influence the employment picture for low-income women – and potentially move millions out of poverty. These include:

- Reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- The Child Care and Development Block Grant
- Reauthorization of Workforce Investment Act

In each of our briefs The Women's Economic Security Campaign will develop a poverty impact statement to identify how the specific policy area and recommended program and policy changes would affect women in poverty.

Poverty Impact Statement

The emergence of the green economy offers exciting opportunities for women to learn new skills and secure jobs with family-sustaining wages and benefits. Because many green jobs will require only some post-secondary education or training (such as a certificate or on-the-job training), they offer low-income women, many of whom have little more than a high school diploma, the chance to move out of poverty into true economic security for themselves and their families.

Green jobs could prove especially beneficial to struggling single mothers. In 2008, there were more than 12.4 million people in families with children that were headed by

a single female living in poverty. A single female-headed household with two children living in poverty earned just \$17,346 annually in 2008. If these single female workers received the training, education and job opportunities newly available in the green jobs sector, they could potentially raise their annual wages to about \$42,900 for a lower-skilled position and \$61,280 for a medium-skilled position. The additional training and job opportunities could help to move these families out of poverty and on the path to economic security.

[Sources: Current Population Survey, 2008 (table POV03) and Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008]

A Greener Employment Picture

With substantial investments from the Obama Administration and Congress in clean energy sectors, the greening of America is underway. This has started a short-term wave of new green-collar employment with potential, long-term implications for the environment, industry and workers.

What are Green Jobs? As definitions of "green," "clean," and "sustainable" evolve, progress continues on developing new jobs while redefining existing ones.⁴ According to the Department of Labor, "the green economy encompasses any economic activity related to reducing the use of fossil fuels, decreasing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, increasing the efficiency of energy usage, recycling materials, and developing and adopting renewable sources of energy."⁵ Currently, "green jobs" can be broadly characterized as opportunities for employment that substantially contribute to preserving or restoring the environment, including environmental research, housing retrofits and fuel-efficient vehicle assembly.⁶

The educational background and skills required for these jobs vary widely. Low-skill jobs such as construction laborers typically require no more than a high school diploma/GED or less. Middle-skill positions such as electricians, iron workers and heating/air conditioning installers require some post-secondary education but less than a four-year college degree. Finally, high-skill jobs including civil and electrical engineers, require a college degree or more.

Most jobs in the nation's economy are at the middle-skill level and will continue to be.⁷ This pattern is also likely to hold true for "green" jobs. An analysis conducted for the District of Columbia's Office of Planning, for example, estimated that most (42 percent) of the labor demand generated by the city's green initiatives would be in middle-skill jobs.⁸

To take full advantage of this burgeoning jobs sector, it is crucial that low-income women with children receive the training they need not only to enter low-skill, low-wage green jobs, but also to move up the career ladder to middle-skill positions that pay family-sustaining wages and offer employer-funded benefits.

What are Green Jobs?

According to the Department of Labor: The green economy encompasses the economic activity related to reducing the use of fossil fuels, decreasing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, increasing the efficiency of energy usage, recycling materials, and developing and adopting renewable sources of energy.

A Sampling of Green Occupations

- **Building Retrofitting:** electricians, heating/air conditioning installers, carpenters, construction equipment operators, roofers, industrial truck drivers, construction managers, building inspectors
- **Mass Transit/Freight Rail:** civil engineers, rail track layers, electricians, welders, metal fabricators, bus drivers, dispatchers, railroad conductors
- **Smart Grid:** computer software engineers, electrical engineers, equipment assemblers, machinists, team assemblers, construction laborers, operating engineers, electrical power line installers and repairers
- **Wind Power:** environmental engineers, iron and steel workers, millwrights, sheet metal workers, machinists, construction equipment operators, industrial truck drivers, first-line production supervisors
- **Solar Power:** electrical engineers, electricians, industrial machinery mechanics, welders, metal fabricators, construction managers
- **Advanced Biofuels:** chemical engineers, chemists, chemical equipment operators, chemical technicians, mixing and blending operators, agricultural workers, farm product purchasers, agricultural supervisors

Growth in Green Jobs

Unfortunately, uniform data do not exist on the current number or potential growth in green jobs. Because the green jobs sector is new, generating job estimates can be difficult. However, according to a report by the Center for American Progress and the Political Economy Research Institute, a \$150 million investment in clean energy (just one of the green jobs areas) would generate 2.5 million jobs. By comparison, this same level of investment in the fossil-fuel industry would generate about 800,000 jobs.⁹

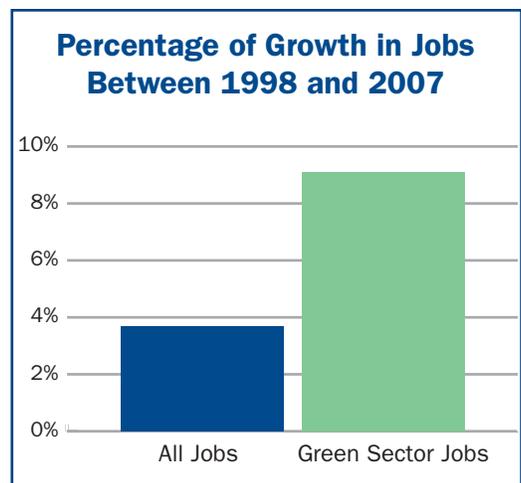
Before the recession, the green sector was showing strong growth. The Pew Charitable Trusts found that jobs in the clean energy economy grew at a national rate of 9.1 percent, while traditional jobs grew by only 3.7 percent between 1998 and 2007.¹⁰

According to the US Conference of Mayors, the metro areas with the highest number of green jobs in 2006 included¹¹ :

- New York (25,021 green jobs)
- Washington, D.C. (24,287 green jobs)
- Houston (21,250 green jobs)
- Los Angeles (20,136 green jobs)
- Chicago (16,120 green jobs)

Smaller metro areas are also showing the first signs of an emerging green economy. In 2008, the Memphis, Tennessee area had 1,075 green jobs; Tucson, Arizona had 1,310 green jobs and Boise, Idaho had 1,962 green jobs.¹²

Although it still is not clear how many jobs will emerge as America goes green, low-income women who get in on the ground floor and are prepared to take advantage of opportunities as they arise will be in an excellent position to land good jobs. To do that, they will need to receive the training vital to securing jobs in industries where women have traditionally faced barriers. A significant federal investment in the green sector through ARRA offers low-income women an unprecedented chance to do just that, providing an entrée into jobs that will enable them to not only meet their families' basic needs, but set them on a path toward long-term economic security that will benefit the country as a whole.



Source: The Pew Charitable Trusts

A Green Jobs Training Program that Works for Women: Cypress Mandela Construction Training Program, Oakland, CA

Cypress Mandela Construction Training Program is a pre-apprenticeship program that has been highly successful in serving young adults with barriers to employment, typically placing 90 percent of its graduates in jobs. It is one of three primary partners in the Oakland Green Jobs Corps, a job-training and employment pipeline providing "green pathways out of poverty" for low-income adults in Oakland.

Cypress Mandela has one of the best track records in the nation for attracting women to its training programs and launching them into full-fledged careers. Forty students graduated in June from the program's first 12-week green jobs training cycle – 20 percent of them women. Art Shanks, executive director of Cypress Mandela, says that number is "the highest percentage of women for any similar training program in the nation."

Although Shanks would like to see that number grow, he notes that the women who do complete the Cypress Mandela program tend to stay employed in good jobs. He cites one woman who graduated from the construction training program seven years ago, landed a job on the Bay Bridge Project and is now one of its senior managers.

Shanks attributes the program's success in recruiting and placing women to its focus on preparing them for a male-dominated workplace. "We treat them just like they're treated in the field," he says. "Some programs are just for women and don't prepare them for the environment in the field. It doesn't serve them when they get on the job."

Programs like Cypress Mandela, which are focused on the specific training and placement needs of women, have the greatest potential to open up non-traditional green job occupations to millions of low-income women who previously had little chance of breaking through.

Green Jobs: An Opportunity for Women and our Economy

Addressing Unemployment: Our nation faces substantial unemployment problems. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. economy lost 6.7 million jobs between December 2007, when the recession began, and July 2009.

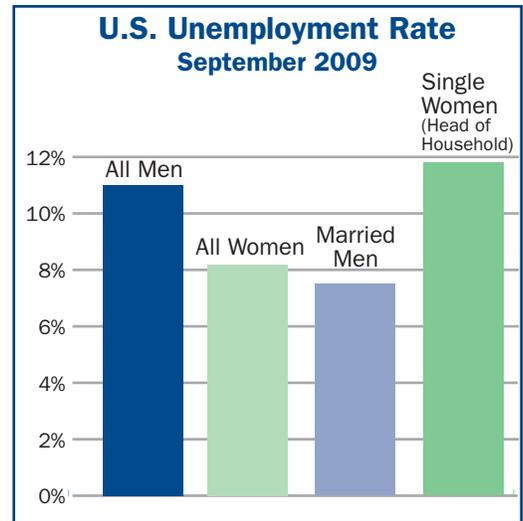
While the current economic recession has resulted in the loss of construction and manufacturing jobs—increasing the unemployment rate among men—it has also deeply affected women. The unemployment rate for single women head of households was 11.6 percent in September 2009—higher than the overall unemployment rate of 11 percent for men and substantially higher than the unemployment rate for married men (7.4 percent).¹³

If the nation is to address its substantial unemployment and economic problems, it is critical to link job growth opportunities to those who need the jobs most.

The Benefits of a Green Job Sector

Creating green jobs—while certainly inadequate to fill the nation’s entire employment gap—can help large numbers of workers obtain well-paying jobs with benefits.

As noted earlier, definitions of what constitutes a “green job” are still evolving. Similar labor, managerial and technical occupations can be found in both green and non-green industries. While the data do not yet allow us to look specifically at occupations in green industry versus non-green industry, we do



Source: US Dept. of Labor

Female Representation in Non-Traditional Occupations

Occupational Title	Median Hourly Wages (2008)	Skill Requirement	% Women (2008)
Construction laborers	\$13.71	Low	3.1%
Roofer**	\$16.17	Low	0.5%
Helpers, carpenters	\$12.21	Low	4.1%
Electrical power line installers & repairers	\$26.94	Middle	1.4%
First-line supervisors/managers of construction trades & extraction workers	\$27.95	Middle	2.7%
Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters	\$21.94	Middle	1.4%
Civil engineer**	\$35.87	High	10.6%
Operations manager	\$44.02	High	27.9%

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics and US Department of Labor

know that green sector jobs tend to be higher paying. For example, the Council of Economic Advisors found that industrial machinery mechanics who work in power generation, an emerging green sector, earn about \$28 per hour. By comparison, mechanics with similar jobs, but who do not work in the power generating field, earn about \$6 less per hour, suggesting a sizeable wage premium associated with some green jobs.¹⁴

Many of these jobs, however, tend to be concentrated in parts of the economy with historically limited female representation. As the table on page 6 illustrates women have very limited representation in occupations that predominate in the green jobs sector. While there is greater representation of women in higher-skilled non-traditional jobs, such as engineering and management, the numbers are still woefully low.

Breaking Barriers: Robyn Bush, Wind Farm Ironworker

The small minority of women, who have forged successful careers in the male-dominated construction trades, offer an excellent model for breaking gender barriers in the emerging green jobs sector.

Robyn Bush is one of them.

Four years ago Bush was working in sales for Home Depot, a job she had held for nearly eight years. She was anxious for a new position that would pay more and provide greater long-term security for her two children. She read an article about a 12-week pre-apprenticeship training program offered by Chicago Women in Trades (a grantee of Chicago Foundation for Women) at Joliet Community College near her home. She signed up.

Through the program, Bush learned the skills she needed to apply and interview for jobs few women had held before her. “I interviewed with the pipefitters, the teamsters, the boilermakers,” she recalls. Ultimately she landed a position with the ironworker’s local —making her the first journey level woman ironworker in the local’s history.

Today Bush is using her skills to power the new green economy — working on a wind farm outside of Chicago preparing blades for wind towers. She credits her success in an overwhelmingly male-dominated industry to gaining confidence in her skills through the Chicago



Women in Trades program and developing the toughness to overcome physical and mental barriers on the job.

“You have to think of yourself as one of the guys, while accepting that you may occasionally need to ask for help if you don’t have the physical strength to do something,” says Bush.

Bush was also fortunate to have childcare support at home, including a husband with a flexible work schedule. She admits that without that support she would not have been able to put in the occasional 15-hour days, underscoring the need for a child care component to any serious effort to bring more low-income women into the green jobs sector.

Right now, Bush feels fortunate to be doing work she loves that offers an excellent pension plan and allows her to contribute to a better future for her children and society as a whole. “I wasn’t looking for a green job. I was just looking for work. But for me this is the best opportunity from both a monetary standpoint and for a future career.”

Despite sporadic efforts at the federal, state and local levels to create opportunities for women in these fields, the majority continue to gravitate to occupations with low-wages, limited benefits, and few advancement opportunities. The median hourly wage for roofers – 99 percent of whom are men – is \$16.17, enough to cover the basic needs of a small family. Compare this to the \$11.48 median hourly wage of preschool teachers, 98 percent of whom are women. At this wage, a preschool teacher would have to work in excess of 25 hours more per week to support a similar living standard.¹⁵

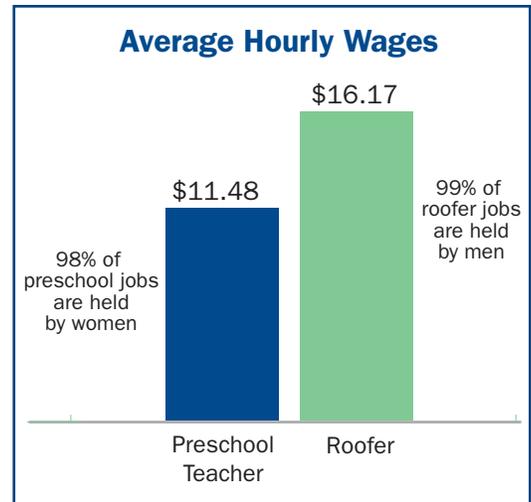
Women would benefit significantly from gaining access to green jobs that pay higher wages. To shift the current paradigm of women under-represented in most green job occupations, however, will require direct policy and program action.

Funding for Women and Green Jobs

Substantial new opportunities are being created in the private and public sector to spur green job development. The box on page 9 highlights the funding available through ARRA that could support programs aimed at bringing more women into green occupations. Additionally, non-ARRA sources include \$3 billion in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds that could prioritize training and supporting women in green job careers and competitive grants offered through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s On the Job Supportive Services Program. The purpose of these grants is to increase the number of women and minorities in transportation jobs, including trains, light rail and other green transportation. The grants cover recruitment, skills training, job placement, child care, outreach, transportation to work sites, pre-employment assessment, mediation and counseling.

ARRA and non-ARRA funding can help expand women-focused green job training, recruitment and placement, and be combined and leveraged with the substantial resources at the state and local level, including philanthropic and other private dollars.

If women are to gain a significant foothold in the green sector, federal funding will need to prioritize programs that both train women for these positions and help them make the challenging transition into male-dominated occupations. This means not only assisting low-income women in developing the required skills, but ensuring that issues such as child care needs are factored into any effort to recruit and retain women.



Source: CommonDreams.org

If women are to gain a significant foothold in the green sector, federal funding will need to prioritize programs that both train women for these positions and help them make the challenging transition into male-dominated occupations.

ARRA Green Jobs Funding Sources

The items listed below include existing programs that received additional one-time funding through ARRA, as well as newly-created programs:

- 🌱 **Workforce Investment Act (WIA)—Adults Program:** \$500 million to improve the quality of the workforce. States must allocate 85 percent to local workforce boards, with the remaining 15 percent reserved for statewide activities. The funding prioritizes public assistance recipients, low-income people and veterans and can cover supportive services, including child care and transportation, as well as programs that offer occupational and basic skills training, job search assistance, counseling, and career planning. It is also important to note that local workforce investment boards can prioritize occupations (including green jobs) for these funds.
- 🌱 **Workforce Investment Act—Dislocated Workers Program:** \$1.25 billion to meet the employment and training needs of dislocated workers, including those who have been laid off or terminated, people who have exhausted unemployment insurance, and displaced homemakers who are no longer supported by another family member.
- 🌱 **Green Jobs —Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training:** \$500 million in competitive grants to nonprofits, state or local government. Funds can be used for all aspects involved in connecting workers to jobs and job training projects that prepare workers for careers in energy efficiency. These funds can prioritize low-income populations.
- 🌱 **Weatherization Assistance Program:** Up to \$1 billion in grants to states for weatherization job training. States sub-grant these funds to Community Action Agencies and other nonprofits or public agencies.
- 🌱 **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants:** \$3.2 billion that can be used for a wide variety of activities, including training workers to conduct energy audits and to perform energy retrofits and building inspections.
- 🌱 **Worker Training in High Growth and Emerging Industry Sectors:** A \$250 million grant program overseen by the Department of Labor to train workers for careers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries. The funds are also available to support worker training for other economic recovery funds such as retrofitting of buildings, green construction, and renewable electric power production.

Barriers to Women Accessing and Keeping Green Jobs

Even with increased funding, women face substantial barriers to accessing green jobs, including a lack of training and role models in these fields, limited work supports, sexual harassment and hiring discrimination. The following barriers pose the biggest obstacles for women who want to reap the rewards of the new green economy:

- 🌱 **Lack of Awareness of and Support for Career Opportunities.** There is ample evidence suggesting that women and girls are not informed of careers that may lead them to more non-traditional job choices. In school, for example, girls may be steered away from classes where they would learn to use tools and repair machinery or excel in science and math. As adults, women are often not directed into non-traditional classes or training opportunities. Those who do make the leap into non-traditional careers have few role models in their family or community and may feel a sense of isolation at their worksite. This sense of isolation can decrease as more women join the field and as women find supportive networks and groups of other women facing similar challenges.

- ❁ **Lack of Accessible Training or Work Supports.** For women interested in green jobs, participating in training programs, particularly those focused on non-traditional careers, may not be possible if child care, flexible hours and accessible transportation are unavailable. Research indicates that women head of households, juggling increased family responsibilities and limited income, need additional supports to train for a job, obtain employment, and keep that job. Non-traditional jobs often have non-traditional hours and locations, making it difficult to find adequate transportation and child care. Some jobs may require women to own a car. Others may be located far from public transportation lines. When these critical links fall through, too often women must quit their jobs or take days off work, risking termination.
- ❁ **Discrimination and/or Harassment.** In the heavily male-dominated fields that make up the green sector, discrimination and sexual harassment are potentially significant occupational hazards for women. Many women in non-traditional jobs end up quitting in the face of repeated violations by co-workers. While there are anti-discrimination and harassment policies on the books, without proper enforcement they neither protect women nor help to change the anti-female culture of some of these workplaces.

Putting Women and Greens Jobs on One City's Agenda: DC Appleseed

The emergence of a new green jobs sector is creating opportunities for advocacy organizations to get in on the ground floor and significantly influence city agendas. That has been the experience of DC Appleseed, a Washington Area Women's Foundation grantee that uses the volunteer services of lawyers and other experts to develop solutions to problems facing the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

As a partner in the Working Poor Families project, DC Appleseed was well aware of the problems confronting low-income women in the city and the importance of identifying career paths that would provide greater economic security. "We decided that the emerging green jobs industry presented the perfect chance to open up new employment doors for low-income women," said Judy Berman, deputy director of DC Appleseed.

Berman and other advocates from DC Appleseed started attending public committee meetings held by the city's recently-appointed Green Collar Jobs Advisory Council. "We were among a small handful of organizations that showed up, participated and made ourselves known. We inserted the issue of creating training and job opportunities for women in the green economy into the discussion whenever we could, and we had data to back up our assertions" said Berman.

D.C. officials started to listen. DC Appleseed was invited to make suggestions for a pilot project that would increase green job opportunities for women in the city. One of the suggestions was that the city partner with Washington Area Women in the Trades (WAWIT), a union-affiliated construction training program for low-income women, to extend their regular training program with a week-long supplementary green jobs curriculum. The supplementary training would be available to former and current WAWIT participants to educate women in the construction trades about environmental policy in D.C. and help them identify job opportunities with a focus on weatherization. The city's Office of Planning decided to make a small grant to WAWIT (another Washington Area Women's Foundation grantee) for this purpose, and subsequently partnered with them on additional federal grant proposals.

Now that they have the ear of local officials, Berman says advocates from DC Appleseed are speaking up regularly to make sure that new green development projects in the city actively recruit and hire women. "We're talking about everything from considering child care needs to including pictures of women in job recruitment brochures," says Berman. "We are raising the level of awareness on this issue, and that is having an impact."

Recommendations for Policymakers

As our nation makes the transition to a green economy, we must ensure that opportunities are available to all those seeking greater economic security for themselves and their families. Government, the private sector and philanthropy have a critical role to play in this effort.

Increasing training, counseling and work supports will help knock down longstanding societal barriers that have prevented women from entering non-traditional careers. The stakes are especially high for low-income women with limited skills and education. By entering on the ground floor of this emerging sector, they have the potential to acquire the experience needed to secure good jobs that will help lift them out of poverty and contribute to our country's long-term economic recovery.

Addressing women's under-representation in high-wage/high-demand occupations will require specific strategies grounded in regional workforce, education and training, and job growth realities.

To address the needs of women who want to enter the green workforce, policymakers at all levels of government should take action to:

- **Ensure that new and existing programs that fund training provide women with the supports they need to succeed.** This includes career coaching, mentoring, and other services aimed at helping women navigate non-traditional occupations.
- **Improve access to pre- and post-job placement services.** Policies should encourage the development of programming that includes recruitment, job placement and retention, and career pathways specifically targeted to meet the needs of women workers.
- **Align resources and create incentives to ensure more women participate in and complete training and job placement programs.** This would involve, for example, revising or eliminating policies and practices that inhibit collaboration across different funding streams, such as WIA and WANTO – Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act, and different departments – the Department of Labor and the Department of Education. Encouraging such collaboration would allow for the development of programs that provide the full range of services women need to move through pre-vocational, training, apprenticeship, job placement, retention and advancement.
- **Make sure federal programs that could help women break into non-traditional fields receive adequate funding.** Most notably, WANTO has a funding authority of just \$1 million, and is often funded at even lower levels. If we are serious about providing women with the support they need to take full advantage of the green economy, programs like WANTO need to be expanded.
- **Enforce anti-discrimination in hiring and worksite practices.** All of the green jobs that will be created with ARRA funding fall under federal anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity laws. With the Obama Administration's support of federal project labor agreements; there is increased opportunity to ensure that



green workplaces are good places to work for all employees. It is critical that states and localities affirm these principles by making sure that low-income women are a priority when hiring for green jobs. Once on the job, workplace harassment is also a major obstacle to women keeping jobs. Laws protecting women must be enforced.

- 🌱 **Ensure accountability.** Establishing benchmarks to ensure that more women are accessing green jobs is only useful if there are mechanisms in place to hold government and business accountable. If the public sector (whether through policy or contract) sets benchmarks for placing women in green sector positions, it is critical that those goals are tracked and monitored to make sure they are being met.
- 🌱 **Assess and disseminate information on programs that work.** Public agencies should evaluate their policies and practices to measure which are the most successful in helping women train for, secure and keep green jobs. Results should be shared with the public and private sectors to ensure that their programs reflect best practices.

Special Recommendations for States and Localities

Much of the implementation of federal policies rests with state and local governments. In addition to the recommendations that apply to all policymakers, state and local officials should:

- 🌱 Leverage and build on federal investments in green jobs training by using state and local funds to fill gaps in the training and supportive services.
- 🌱 Support the development of new business and education partnerships to expand education, training and apprenticeship programs that will prepare low-income women for green economy jobs.
- 🌱 Support state and local labor market research that identifies green sector opportunities and provides support for training and recruitment strategies that will increase women's participation in those occupations.

Ensuring that Federal Dollars Help Train Women for Green Jobs: The Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis

With some \$14.76 million in federal stimulus money to fund weatherization programs, the city of Memphis and Shelby County have an opportunity to create hundreds of jobs by making homes in low-income neighborhoods more energy efficient. David Ciscel, an economist who recently co-authored a report on the potential impact of weatherization efforts on the local economy found that Shelby County has both the highest unemployment in the area and the greatest number of homes that could benefit from weatherization.

Meeting this dual need, however, will not be possible without training programs that provide low-income workers with the skills they need to land jobs weatherizing homes and businesses. "We have this stimulus money coming in but right now there are very few programs available to train people to do the needed work," said Ruby Bright, executive director and chief operating officer for the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis (WFGM). "Our goal is to make sure that a portion of those funds provide employment training to the unskilled and under-served residents of Shelby County, especially low-income women, so that they can fill these weatherization jobs."

To that end, WFGM has taken several steps to ensure that funds available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) are used to train and place low-income women in green jobs. The Foundation's efforts include:

- 🌱 *Meeting with the city of Memphis and Shelby County government officials to set up mechanisms for tracking the distribution of ARRA funds and making sure that as contracts are awarded they include the training and hiring of women.*
- 🌱 *Working with local non-profits, including grantees, which have developed green jobs training curriculums that can prepare women for the jobs as they become available. "We want to be ready to provide support to the businesses that are being awarded these weatherization contracts," said Bright. "We want to say to them we have a training module available that you can use. We would like you to agree to support the training and hire the women who go through it."*
- 🌱 *Securing a commitment from Congressman Steve Cohen, who represents the impoverished 9th district of Memphis, to endorse and host community meetings focused on promoting employment opportunities for low-income women in weatherization and other green occupations.*

Says Bright: "The needs of low-income women need to be front and center when the hiring begins. We are trying to make sure that happens."

Conclusion

With the proper training and supports low-income women can thrive in the green collar workforce. But getting the assistance they need to climb over formidable barriers will require a concerted effort at all levels of government, as well as from philanthropic and other private entities.

With major funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other federal sources, there are ample opportunities to direct programs and services to the millions of workers who have lost their jobs or whose wages are so low that they are unable to cover even the most basic needs. Women should be at the top of that list. Our country's track record in training, placing and supporting women in well-paying non-traditional jobs is unacceptable. These new funding sources offer a chance to finally address the obstacles and inequities that for too long have prevented more women from entering the non-traditional fields that dominate the new green jobs sector.

What lies before us is a rare opportunity to shape a more promising future for millions of struggling women and their children. In the process we can help our nation move toward a long-term economic recovery that will benefit us all.

Steps Philanthropy Can Take to Create Green Job Opportunities for Low-Income Women

Philanthropy, particularly women's philanthropy, has an important role to play in creating job pathways for low-income women in the new green economy.

That role starts with **grant-making**. Charitable foundations should direct grants to programs and services that support the development of a green jobs training infrastructure for women, including:

- Local workforce training efforts such as curriculum development aimed at training low-income women. This includes adult basic/remedial education connected to post-secondary institutions that offer credentials or degrees in green sector occupations.
- Direct services such as education and training (including pre-apprenticeships), tuition assistance, supportive services, job readiness, placement and retention counseling, and efforts aimed at encouraging young girls to work with their hands and pursue non-traditional jobs. Philanthropy can fill the gap by focusing on activities that public dollars cannot or do not support.
- Advocacy to improve the access women have to a full range of services and supports crucial to preparing for and succeeding in "green" careers.
- Evaluation to help monitor the implementation of green jobs policy and programs, and their successes and challenges.

Philanthropy can increase the reach and effectiveness of their grant-making, by **leveraging** their investments in a variety of areas. They can:

- Encourage Collaboration so that there is coordination between public and private funds, partners, activities, and programs.
- Convene meetings of public officials and other key stakeholders to explore the barriers women face in accessing green jobs in their community and stimulate thinking about how to overcome those barriers.
- Raise Awareness of the importance of ensuring that women are an integral part of the emerging green economy. This includes sharing with elected officials and the media the experiences of grantee partners involved in training and supporting women in non-traditional jobs.
- Advocate for change by writing letters to the editor, testifying before local and state policymaking bodies, meeting with policymakers, sharing grantee experiences and other relevant information with the media, and signing on to campaigns aimed at improving employment options in the green sector for low-income, single women with children.

Additional Resources

Green Jobs Resources

Green Jobs Demand Analysis, D.C. Department of Planning

www.planning.dc.gov/planning/frames.asp?doc=/planning/lib/planning/green_collar_jobs/dc_green_jobs_final_report.pdf

Women and the Green Economy, Wider Opportunities for Women

www.wowonline.org/documents/Women_and_the_Green_Economy2009FINAL.pdf

High Road or Low Road? Job Quality in the New Economy, Good Jobs First

www.goodjobsfirst.org/pdf/gjfgreenjobsrpt.pdf

U.S. Metro Economies: Current and Potential Green Jobs in the U.S. Economy U.S.

Conference of Mayors usmayors.org/pressreleases/uploads/GreenJobsReport.pdf

Bringing Home the Green Recovery: A User's Guide to the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Green for All & Policy Link

www.greenforall.org/resources/recoveryusersguide/

The Clean Energy Economy: Repowering Jobs, Business and Investments Across

America, Pew Center on the States www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploaded-Files/Clean_Economy_Report_Web.pdf

Job Opportunities for the Green Economy: A State-by-State Picture of Occupations

That Gain from Green Investments, Center for American Progress and Political Economy Research Institute at University of Massachusetts, Amherst www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/06/pdf/green_jobs.pdf

Other Job and Training Resources

State Opportunities Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, National

Governors' Association www.nga.org/Files/pdf/ARRAENERGYGREENJOBS.PDF

From Stimulus to System: Using the ARRA to Serve Disadvantaged Jobseekers, Center for Law and Social Policy

www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/0489.pdf

Training Policies in Brief, An Overview of Federal Workforce Development Policies,

Workforce Alliance www.workforcealliance.org/atf/cf/%7B93353952-1DF1-473A-B105-7713F4529EBB%7D/Briefing_Ed2.pdf

Endnotes

¹ U.S Bureau of Census, Current Population Survey 2009 (Tables POV1 and POV2)

² Data are drawn from Center for American Progress, U.S. Bureau of Census, American Community Survey 2009 (B23003 and B23007), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Institute for Women's Policy Research

³ Data are drawn from Institute for Women's Policy Research, Center for American Progress, and U.S Bureau of Census (POV15).

⁴ The Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics is working to develop a definition for green sectors and jobs, which will be used to ensure that workforce development efforts identify and target these green jobs and their training needs. The Department has also supported occupational research that begins to define green jobs, review sectors impacted by green investments, and understand how new green technology and materials will affect occupational requirements. More information on green jobs and the developing definition can be found at: www.onetcenter.org/reports/Green.html

⁵ U.S Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, Greening of the World of Work: Implications for O*NET-SOC and New and Emerging Occupations

⁶ Wider Opportunities for Women, Women and the Green Economy, March 2009. www.wowonline.org/publicpolicy/documents/GreenJobsFactSheetJuly2009.pdf

⁷ The Workforce Alliance. America's Forgotten Middle Skills: Education and Training Requirements in the Next Decade and Beyond. 2008. www.skills2compete.org/atf/cf/7B8E9806BF46694217AF7426F62108EA687D/ForgottenJobsReport20Final.pdf

⁸ The Louis Berger Group, Inc. District of Columbia: Green Collar Jobs Demand Analysis Final Report.. Washington: 2008. www.planning.dc.gov/planning/frames.asp?doc=/planning/lib/planning/green_collar_jobs/dc_green_jobs_final_report.pdf

⁹ Center for American Progress and Political Economy Research Institute, The Economic Benefits of Investing in Renewable Energy, June 2009. www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/06/pdf/peri_report.pdf

¹⁰ Pew Center on the States. The Clean Energy Economy. June 2009. www.pewcenteronthestates.org/report_detail.aspx?id=52872

¹¹ The United States Conference of Mayors. First Metro Green Jobs Report Projects 4.2 million jobs by 2038. October 2008. (usmayors.org/pressreleases/uploads/greenjobsrelease.pdf)

¹² The United States Conference of Mayors. First Metro Green Jobs Report Projects 4.2 million jobs by 2038. October 2008. (usmayors.org/pressreleases/uploads/greenjobsrelease.pdf)

¹³ Bureau of Labor Statistics. www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t07.htm

¹⁴ Office of Vice President Biden, Middle Class Task Force Staff Report: Green Jobs: A Pathway to a Strong Middle Class. www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/mctf_one_staff_report_final.pdf

¹⁵ CommonDreams.org, How the Green Economic Can Promote Equal Opportunities for Women. www.commondreams.org/view/2009/07/03-8