

Planting the Seeds for a “Green Workforce Service” in Union County

**A Proposal Prepared by
Paul Jurmo, Ed.D.
Dean, Economic Development and Continuing Education
Union County College**

January 22, 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Union County College’s Division of Economic Development and Continuing Education (UCC) has secured a federal grant which will provide start-up funding for a new Green Workforce Service initiative to begin in mid-2010. UCC hopes to use this first year to – in collaboration with other government and non-government agencies -- develop a series of demonstration projects which help lower-skilled, lower-income workers move into a range of green jobs.

Goals

- build the expertise of under-employed individuals and connect them to employment in emerging “green” jobs;
- build community stakeholder support for the idea of “greening” the County’s communities;
- provide various kinds of useful, environmentally-friendly services and products to Union County residents and businesses;
- reduce the carbon footprint and waste disposal problems of Union County;
- establish in-kind and financial supports to sustain this work.

Potential Participants

- Youth (in-school and out-of-school youth);
- Older adults (who might need or want to transition into new employment);
- English language learners (both lower-skilled workers and higher-skilled people who lack English fluency);
- Ex-offenders;
- People with disabilities.

Possible projects

Project #1: a “Green Field” Project in Elizabeth

In City-owned lot behind UCC Kellogg Building, (a) an urban farm will teach green landscaping and food production; (b) a solar demonstration site will teach solar panel maintenance; (c) a construction-skills training

site will teach green building, weatherization, green roofing; and (d) the site will be available for community events and will raise community awareness of green technologies and jobs.

Project #2: a Green Technologies Training Center

In UCC's Lessner Building, a Technology Training Center will provide training to various populations in solar equipment, hybrid car, climate and light controls, and repair of major household appliances, as well as other technologies (e.g., communications, security, medical, fire safety).

Project #3: a Green Building Training Program

UCC and partners will provide training in building construction/rehabilitation; energy auditing, weatherization; solar installation; HVAC and electrical/lighting; green roofs; demolition and recycling of building materials; removal of toxic building materials (e.g., asbestos).

Project #4: a Green Transportation Program

UCC and partners will create projects that promote forms of energy-saving transportation (e.g., bicycling, van pooling, alternative fuel vehicles) that reduce carbon emissions and traffic congestion while promoting employment, healthy physical activity, and community building.

Project #5: a Green Retail Program to promote sale of new and used products which reduce waste and increase use of environmentally-sustainable products (e.g., light bulbs, cleaning products, appliances).

Project #6: Recycling Programs to promote jobs in recycling of computers and other electronic waste, cooking oils, food waste, clothing, books, building materials, plastic bags, bicycles, yard waste, and shipping materials.