



Partnership Brief: Green Janitor Education Program

5/2022

Purpose: To help janitorial workers gain new skills and expand their career prospects. The program also improves working conditions for janitors, while addressing climate change and helping businesses save money.

Partners: SEIU Local 26, Minnesota Training Partnership, and a small group of employers.

Dates: Initiated in 2022.

Funding: Portions of the program will be paid by employers. The partners are seeking charitable and public funding for additional costs and for expansion.

Description: Beginning Fall 2022, the partners will implement a new Green Cleaning Janitorial Education Program pilot. This first pilot project will provide 30 hours of skills instruction for 20 janitors, and the partners are looking to expand the project to include more workers. Large portions of the curriculum were developed by Building Skills Partnership in California — in collaboration with workers, union representatives, building owners, business associations, and environmental organizations.

Training content includes sustainability fundamentals, green cleaning principles, energy conservation, recycling and waste diversion, janitor health and safety, and water conservation. Multiple employers have expressed interest in participating in the program, and instruction will be offered to workers in multiple languages. In addition to helping janitors gain new skills to aid in job security and advancement, the program will help them develop safer, green ways of working.

Impact:

The project will begin implementation in Fall 2022, with an initial goal of training 20 workers. In 2023, the partners are looking to expand the program to serve additional workers. SEED LA, a nonprofit consulting group, quantified the economic, environmental, and social impacts of the California program. It found that participating buildings use 5.6% less energy than non-participating buildings, and that 76% of participating buildings had a decrease in energy and water usage. Survey results also indicated positive changes in conservation behaviors among participating janitors at work and at home.

Contact information:

Jerome Balsimo, Executive Director
JBalsimo@mnaflcio.org; 651-335-2896

Judy Swanson, Director of Programming
JSwanson@mnaflcio.org; 612-501-8905

www.mntrainingpartnership.org



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