

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Growing a green workforce

Green training programs emerge to serve new demand

It seems like every business report today includes a story about the need to create green jobs and the need for "green" education programs to prepare workers for the emerging green economy.

With millions of federal dollars slated for green education and training, a variety of new green certification and training

programs are emerging. On May 26, the Obama administration unveiled plans to dedicate \$500 million from the federal stimulus package to train residents of housing projects to weatherize homes and perform other green jobs.



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Of that, \$50 million will be focused on areas hit hardest by the auto industry crisis.

Last February, the AFL-CIO announced the creation of The Center for Green Jobs. The center

will partner with affiliated unions to help pave the way to union jobs in a variety of the country's unionized and greening industries. The center also has formed a partnership with the National Labor College to develop a "green" certificate program for students of the college.

In March, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced the establishment of a California Green Corps to provide experience and training to 1,000 people ages 16-24 to help them prepare for employment in the emerging green economy.

Many of the emerging certification and training programs have a strong focus on thinking globally and acting locally. The increase in new green-focused education and certification programs cross almost

all industries including energy, construction, agriculture, consumer products, investment and manufacturing.

In a March 30 article, The Green Economy Post noted 12 lists that had been posted by national magazines on the top green careers for the decade. The occupations that stood out from all 12 lists included urban and regional planning, environmental attorneys,

emerging green economy as they focus on supporting green initiatives. Some of these traditional occupations include electricians, mechanical engineers, welders, metal workers, construction managers, accountants, analysts, environmental scientists and chemists.

An example of a traditional occupation going green is the need for accountants to support carbon trading

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conservation biologists, energy and environmental engineers, hydrologists, environmental educators, organic food production, sustainability specialists, green software and hardware specialists, wind energy developers and waste disposal specialists.

Changing ideas

It is becoming clear that green jobs are not necessarily new occupations. Many traditional occupations are being touted as "hot" for the

programs. Carbon trading schemes are designed to achieve a reduction of greenhouse gases through the use of tradable emission permits.

The International Accounting and Standards Board and the Financial Accounting Standards Board are conducting a joint project to develop comprehensive guidance on the accounting for emissions trading schemes - essentially creating a "green" accounting.

Like many colleges and universities, Clark College is playing a role in preparing workers for the emerging green economy. The college's building at Columbia Tech Center, which will open this fall, will be the new home for our power utilities program. Also in that building, which has been designed to meet or exceed LEED silver certification standards, we will offer new programs including an Energy Auditor and Weatherization Professional Program as well as Green Specialist Certification training.

At the beginning of the new millennium, everyone was focused on the "new economy." As we prepare to enter a new decade, it seems clear that the new economy will be based on the green economy.

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