



# U.S. EPA Job Training Program

## Groundwork Providence

### Providence, RI



**Overview:** Groundwork Providence is an environmental and community development nonprofit serving northern Rhode Island. Groundwork encourages local residents to make a difference in their communities by engaging them in projects that improve the places where they live, work and play. More specifically, Groundwork seeks to

recruit and train chronically unemployed and underemployed members of communities affected by environmental contamination to help transform blight into clean, community-friendly businesses, green space and affordable housing.

Groundwork received a 2010 U.S. EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant, which provided \$200,000 to further the development of an Adult Environmental Job Training Program to help educate and train residents in need of employment. The program was developed in partnership with representatives from the environmental industry, community groups, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Rhode Island Department of Health, and the Community College of Rhode Island.

The job training program is comprised of four cycles, with 15 participants in each cycle, and has a core curriculum that is

#### Core Curriculum

- OSHA-40 hour HAZWOPER
- OSHA-10 hour Construction Safety Training
- First AID/CPR
- Lead Supervisor/Contractor
- Asbestos Supervisor/Contractor
- Mold Remediation Worker
- 70-hour Contextualized Brownfield Remediation Curriculum
- 20-hour Hands-on, Work-readiness Assessment Project

#### Program Partners

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Community College of Rhode Island, City of Providence, U.S. Department of Labor

designed to help graduates transition into a variety of careers in the environmental field. The program was designed using the combined expertise and lessons learned from Groundwork Providence’s past Adult Job Training programs, best practices developed by local partners, and Job Training Providers across the country. Although program efforts have been extended to all of the communities along the Blackstone River Corridor, where centers for poverty and high concentrations of contaminated property are located, students enrolled in the program are predominantly from Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Woonsocket.

**Participants:** Groundwork Providence recruits highly motivated unemployed, underemployed, and dislocated workers from low-income populations in the surrounding communities with an emphasis on helping disadvantaged minorities, veterans and ex-offenders. In order to fulfill the requirements for program eligibility, the applicant must have at least a high school degree, be able to pass a drug test and complete a 20 hour work-readiness evaluation project. The applicants that are selected have a clear understanding of, and strong interest in, careers in hazardous materials handling and clean-up before beginning the program.



Photo provided by Groundwork Providence.

**Outcomes:** Groundwork Providence began their Brownfield Remediation Job Training in 2002. In order to increase the success of the program, Groundwork uses all partnerships and resources available to provide a One-Stop Career Center for program graduates and employers. To date, over 120 training graduates have been placed in jobs ranging from temporary crew positions on remediation projects to full-time, salaried positions with remediation contractors. With the support of the EPA, Groundwork hopes to train sixty additional graduates for careers in the environmental field while continuing to create and sustain healthy, green communities.