



U.S. EPA Brownfields Job Training Program

The Workplace, Inc.

Bridgeport, CT



Overview: As Southwestern Connecticut's Regional Workforce Development Board, The Workplace, Inc. administers workforce development funds and coordinates providers of job training and education programs to meet the needs of residents and employers in the southwestern Connecticut region. The Workplace, Inc. job training program provides unemployed and underemployed residents of Connecticut with the skills to assess, clean and redevelop properties, mitigate potential health risks, and restore economic vitality to areas where brownfields exist.

Funding in the amount of \$200,000, provided by a 2009 EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant, enabled The Workplace, Inc. to fulfill programmatic goals to establish a well-trained workforce for employers whose business it is to provide remediation services to municipalities, businesses, and individuals. The Workplace, Inc. partnered with Environmental Management Geological Consultants, Inc. to deliver an eight week (340-350 training hours), hands-on Environmental Technician core curriculum for the job training program. Since the inception of the program, there have been three cycles provided by The Workplace, Inc. The first cycle took place in Norwalk during the summer of 2009 and had a total of 21 participants. The second cycle included the areas of Ansonia, Derby, Shelton and Seymour in spring of 2010 with 13 participants, and the last job training cycle took place in the same region during the following summer and had 17 participants. Program graduates were awarded with state- and nationally-recognized credentials in Lead and Asbestos Abatement, the OSHA 40-hour HAZWOPER Certification and OSHA 10-hour Certification.

The Workplace, Inc. partnered with the Southwestern CTWorks One-Stop System to provide a variety of the employment related services; these supportive services included job search assistance and on-the-job follow-up to ensure long term success of the program graduates. The organization was also able to use the Workforce Investment Act, and funding from local corporations and foundations, to leverage additional resources for the students.

Outcomes: The average starting wage for program graduates is approximately \$22.71 per hour. Examples of job training graduates that have successfully completed the program and transitioned into a career in the environmental field include:

- Alternation Global Energy General Manager for residential and commercial energy programs (starting wage: \$25/hour).
- Head Electrician, Chief of Field Operations for a commercial energy group and a starting wage of \$30/hour.
- Assistant Advertising Representative to promote residential and commercial energy programs (starting wage: \$20/hour.)

Core Curriculum

- Environment, Health
- Safety and Industrial Hygiene
- Remediation Technologies
- Lead and Asbestos Abatement
- Wastewater Treatment Plants I
- Commercial Drivers License training with HazMat and Tanker endorsement training
- Disaster Preparedness/Emergency Planning
- OSHA- 40 hour HAZWOPER
- OSHA- 10 hour Construction Safety Training

Program Partners

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Management Geological Consultants, Inc., Southwestern CTWorks, Career Resources, Inc., NEON, Inc., Norwalk Community College, Institute for Environmental Management and Technology, US Department of Labor, CT DOL, CT DEP, CT Department of Community and Economic Development, City of Norwalk, City of Derby, City of Ansonia, City of Shelton, Town of Seymour



Photo provided by The Workplace, Inc.