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# WorkingNews

January 2010 — Third Issue

## SWWDC receives \$959,000 to support businesses and train workers in the renewable energy industry

Southwest Washington will share in a \$5 million bi-state “green jobs” grant awarded to Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP). The award is one of 25 nationally out of a pool of nearly \$100 million in green jobs training grants authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

SWWDC was among a diverse group of partners throughout the metropolitan area that came together to develop the grant, including other workforce councils, education, labor, economic development and business organizations.

Southwest Washington will receive \$959,000 over two years for worker training and “lean green” assessments for local area manufacturers. These assessments, to be conducted by Impact Washington, will help manufacturers determine what they need to do to retool their production operations and up-skill their workers to increase the company’s competitiveness while also reducing environmental impacts. Clark College and Lower Columbia College will provide training in collaboration with Impact Washington.

The project—called Renewable Northwest (ReNW)—will preserve and create over 1,700 jobs in a nine-county region in the renewable energy industry (electric power and biofuels) by building a skilled workforce to support companies that generate power and by assisting local manufacturers with retraining their workforce to produce products in support of the industry. Participants will earn certificates and degrees which meet industry and state-defined standards. For more information, contact Brandi Stewart-Wood at [bstewart-wood@swwdc.org](mailto:bstewart-wood@swwdc.org).

## 2009 *Report to the Community* now available

SWWDC and its partners assisted more than 1,000 local businesses to find skilled employees, placed thousands of adult jobseekers and laid-off workers in training and family-wage jobs, and provided work readiness training and experiences to more than 1,000 low-income youth in 2008–2009. With an influx of more than \$5 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, SWWDC has been able to convene community partners to rapidly deliver workforce services to those most in need.

SWWDC’s 2009 Report to the Community profiles the successes of our workforce partners. Highlights include:

### American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

- SWWDC received \$2.2 million of funding through ARRA for a Summer Youth Employment Program which created more than 700 summer jobs at 126 different employers for 14– to 24-year-old low-income youth with barriers.
- SWWDC received \$2.7 million in ARRA funds which created more than 300 new training slots at local area community colleges and other training providers. Among the occupations in which participants are training are green-related jobs such as weatherization specialists and limited renewable energy technicians.

### Advanced Manufacturing

- SWWDC partnered with Clark College, Lower Columbia College (LCC) and four Oregon community colleges to align and leverage educational and training resources across the region to better respond to manufacturers’ workforce needs and to streamline the training process for workers. This project was funded through a \$90,000 Washington State Skill Panel grant and a \$5 million federal, bi-state Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiative, which also brought \$126,000 in training dollars for SW Washington residents and employers.

### Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

- SWWDC and its partners received \$2 million from the Department of Labor to increase the number of dislocated workers and disadvantaged youth, ages 16–24, pursuing STEM careers. Other initiatives, such as High Tech U and “STEM for 9th graders” provided hands-on exposure to STEM careers for high school students.

For a copy of the report, visit [www.swwdc.org](http://www.swwdc.org) or email [info@swwdc.org](mailto:info@swwdc.org).

The mission of SWWDC is to prepare and promote a highly skilled and adaptive workforce for a healthy, sustainable economy in Southwest Washington.

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### **SWWDC and partners awarded funds to develop 100 STEM related internships; internship sites needed**

The Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board awarded SWWDC \$75,000 to work with school districts, nConnect NW, the SW Washington STEM Coach, Educational Service District 112, and local area employers to create 100 internships for low-income sophomores, juniors and seniors in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related occupations.

Students who complete the 90-hour internships will be eligible to receive a State Need Scholarship which generally covers the first year of tuition and fees at public two- and four-year colleges and universities, and many accredited independent colleges, universities, career schools, and apprenticeships in Washington.

The program is currently seeking employers in the manufacturing, high technology, construction, and transportation and logistics industries who would be willing to offer an internship between February and September 2010. Training and support will be provided to employers. For more information, contact Natalie Pacholl at nConnect NW at [natalie.pacholl@nconnectnw.org](mailto:natalie.pacholl@nconnectnw.org).

Students will be recruited from participating school districts. Interested school districts should contact Brandi Stewart-Wood at [bstewart-wood@swwdc.org](mailto:bstewart-wood@swwdc.org).

### **SWWDC, nConnect NW, Clark and Lower Columbia colleges partner to provide mentors for students pursuing training in high demand fields; volunteers needed**

SWWDC and its partners are one of four recipients of a \$45,000 grant from the Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to provide industry mentors to 30-50 low-income students enrolled in the colleges' Opportunity Grant Programs. Mentors will assist students with their coursework and will provide opportunities for students to learn about the realities of working in their occupation of choice. Networking activities, company tours, and job shadows will also be available.

nConnect NW is recruiting mentors from the manufacturing, welding, and health care fields, including pharmacy, phlebotomy, and medical technology, who can volunteer 15-20 hours between January and June 2010. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Natalie Pacholl at [natalie.pacholl@nconnectnw.org](mailto:natalie.pacholl@nconnectnw.org).

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### PubTalk™ comes to Vancouver

On December 2, Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN), and local law firm Landerholm, Memovich, Lansverk & Whitesides, P.S., joined forces to host the first Southwest Washington PubTalk™. The sold-out event, which drew 79 people, is part of a larger economic and workforce development strategy aimed at retaining talent and creating innovation with the region.



Steve Hix, founder of In Focus and a serial entrepreneur, and Angela Jackson, angel investor spoke to the sold out crowd about what it takes to start a new business venture.

PubTalk™ is a unique mix of educational panel discussions delivered by successful entrepreneurs, investors or business experts combined with opportunities for entrepreneurs to gain expertise in delivering investment pitches. The objective is to leverage the strength and experience of the community, providing an invaluable learning opportunity for young entrepreneurs.

Future Southwest Washington PubTalks™ are scheduled for February 17, April 21, and June 16, 2010. Space is limited and advanced registration is preferred. For more information or to register, visit [www.swwdc.org](http://www.swwdc.org).

### Engineering Employment Symposia for dislocated workers an overwhelming success



More than 400 engineers seeking employment or in career transition attended the six-hour Southwest Washington and Portland Engineering Employment Symposia (EES) on November 12 and 16, gaining valuable knowledge about education and training options, job search skills, and entrepreneurship. The goal of the EES was to help engineering professionals

retool, reinvent, and find employment, and ultimately remain within our community to provide our local employers with the talent they need to be competitive.

Attendees chose from 24 sessions to including Careers and Occupations—What's Hot and What's Not; Skills and Credentials to Make Yourself More Valuable; How to Start Your Own Business, How to Create a Start-Up, Start-Up Stories from nLight and Zubeo, and Job Search Tips and Techniques including Interviewing, Retooling Your Resume, Marketing Yourself, and Effective Networking and Use of Social Media. Accompanying plenary session speakers and exhibitors rounded out the sessions. Some attendees took advantage of a chance to present their business concept to representatives from Oregon Entrepreneur Network (OEN) during a 30 minute private consultation.

Participants found significant value in the symposia; nearly all of the sessions received ratings at or above the 90 percent satisfaction level and 46 people who attended the first event opted to attend the second event.

Coordinated by SWWDC in partnership with regional partners Enterprise for Employment & Education, MTC Works, Worksystems, Inc. and Workforce Investment Council of Clackamas County, the events were funded by a Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

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