



WHY

GREEN IS YOUR COLOR

A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career



WOMEN'S BUREAU
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE

WHY IS GREEN GOOD FOR WOMEN?

GREEN OCCUPATIONS

EDUCATING YOURSELF FOR A GREEN CAREER

FINDING YOUR GREEN JOB

GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WOMEN SUCCEEDING IN GREEN JOBS

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES ON YOUR CAREER PATH

PLANNING YOUR GREEN CAREER

Why Green Is Your Color: A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career was prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau by Public Policy Associates, Inc. (contractor) and Wider Opportunities for Women (subcontractor) under contract # DOLJ099429561.

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The Women's Bureau would like to thank Public Policy Associates, Inc. and Wider Opportunities for Women for their participation in this project and the development of this guide.

This document identifies numerous private sector entities and website resources for informational purposes. The inclusion of such references should not be construed as an official endorsement by the Department of Labor or the Women's Bureau of the identified entities, their products, or their services.

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Hilda L. Solis
Secretary of Labor



Dear Friends:

Jobs in the clean energy economy are a key driver for America's economic recovery and its sustained economic stability. The greening of our economy will continue to bring significant changes to the American workplace and will require workers to acquire new and different skills.

As Secretary of Labor, my vision for the Department of Labor is "Good Jobs for Everyone." Green jobs are good jobs, available to all Americans. Fostering the growth of the clean energy economy will help protect our environment, ensure the U.S. remains competitive in the global economy, and offer great opportunities for the nation's working families.

At the Department of Labor we are retraining dislocated workers and providing the training necessary to prepare workers for the 21st century workplace. That training is for such green occupations as wind and solar power technicians, along with a range of other exciting work opportunities. By providing the preparation needed to succeed in the emerging clean energy economy, we are paving a pathway out of poverty; strengthening urban and rural communities; rebuilding a strong middle class; and protecting the health of our citizens and planet.

To mark Earth Day 2009, I hosted a discussion on Women and Green Jobs with Nancy Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. For the first time at the Department of Labor, more than 35 women leaders from labor, business, academia, government, and nonprofit sectors around the country shared how they are shaping our nation's green economic future.

In our discussion, it became clear that American workers and employers must lead this green revolution to win the future. To do so, they need to understand what green jobs are, how to educate themselves for a green career, and how to find a green job. We are working hard to ensure that women have access to these high-paying, high-demand jobs so that they can advance their careers and achieve economic security for themselves and their families.

To help me carry out my vision of Good Jobs for Everyone, the Women's Bureau is taking a leading role in promoting the entry of women into green jobs. I hope you, as a worker or a workforce development professional, will find this guide a useful tool in building a path to the jobs of the future.

Hilda L. Solis

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Sara Manzano-Díaz
Director of the Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor



Dear Friends:

In 1920, just two months before women gained the right to vote, Congress created the Women's Bureau — an agency charged with safeguarding the interests of working women and advocating for their equality and economic security. After 90 years, the Women's Bureau continues to advance its mission, thus our anniversary theme: “90 Years: Still Working.”

Today, the vision of the Women's Bureau is to empower all working women to achieve economic security by preparing them for higher-paying jobs, ensuring fair compensation, promoting workplace flexibility, and helping women veterans who are experiencing homelessness reintegrate into the workforce.

The emerging clean energy economy is shaping employment opportunities across the country. The growing commitment to sustainability has increased the demand for green products and services, and created a variety of new occupations and career paths. The resulting increased demand for workers offers exciting opportunities for women because jobs in the clean energy economy generally offer higher wages and better benefits than the types of jobs in which women are now clustered.

Using Secretary Solis' Earth Day 2009 national roundtable as a model, the Women's Bureau hosted 30 “Women and Green Jobs” roundtables around the country from September to December 2009. According to participants, a lack of awareness or information about green jobs is the key challenge women face to entering these careers.

In response, the Women's Bureau commissioned *Why Green Is Your Color: A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career* to give women the information and resources they need to succeed in the developing green economy. The guide will provide women workers and workforce development professionals with information on the benefits of green jobs for women; the range of in-demand and emerging green jobs; education and training opportunities; finding a green job; green entrepreneurship; women succeeding in green jobs; overcoming challenges; and planning a green career. The Women's Bureau will continue to work to ensure that women are key participants in and beneficiaries of the growth of the green economy in the coming decades.

I want to thank the Women's Bureau staff for their significant contributions to this project's success.

Sara Manzano-Díaz