Opening Doors to Opportunities in the Green Economy: *Why is Green Good for Women?*

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Prepared for the
U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau
by Public Policy Associates, Incorporated
and Wider Opportunities for Women

Opening Remarks

Sara Manzano-Diaz, Director
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Growing Sectors of the Green Economy

Jason Walsh, Director of Policy and Strategic Partnerships
Blue Green Alliance

Why Green Jobs are Good for Women

Joan Kuriansky, Executive Director
Wider Opportunities for Women

Adding a Gender Lens to Green Jobs

- Women are the growing workforce
- Women have made progress in nontraditional jobs
- Women are underrepresented in green jobs
- Must address barriers to entering into jobs that are nontraditional to women but can provide for an economically secure future

Many Green Jobs Are Nontraditional to Women

- Defining nontraditional jobs
- Benefits to nontraditional green jobs
- Women are seeking out green job opportunities
- Targeted efforts to engage women have big pay-offs

Green Jobs = New Opportunities

- Reasons to Consider a Green Job:
  - *Reason 1:* A green job can provide the chance to earn more
  - *Reason 2:* Women can start with any skill level
  - *Reason 3:* There are a variety of jobs available for different interests
  - *Reason 4:* There are multiple ways to get started in a green job
  - *Reason 5:* You can be a worker of any age
  - *Reason 6:* Green jobs can give women greater satisfaction
  - *Reason 7:* Green employers are looking to hire

Building Green:
Pre-Apprenticeship Programs for Women

Connie Ashbrook, Executive Director
Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.

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Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. (OTI) is a nonprofit dedicated to promoting the success of women in the trades through education, leadership, and mentorship.

Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. *(continued)*

- Started in 1989
- Grew into a nine-person nonprofit
- Created to help women and minorities be successful in the construction, mechanical, and utility trades
- Promotes economic, gender, and racial justice

OTI Programs

- Pathways Program
  - Helps women “get the skills to pay the bills” with a free seven week, pre-apprenticeship class

- Trades Offer Girls Options (TOGO)
  - Educates young women about all the career opportunities in the building, construction, and utility trades

OTI Programs *(continued)*

- Tradeswomen Organized for Outreach, Leadership, and Support (TOOLS)
  - Helps tradeswomen advocate for equal representation in the trades, including gender justice and racial justice

Women in Trades Career Fair

- Annual career fair encouraging women and girls to explore high-skill, living wage careers in the construction trades
- Over 1000 middle & high school girls and 500 adult women attend
- *The event focus:* Hands-on workshops taught by tradeswomen role-models

Trades and Apprenticeship Career Class

- Trades and Apprenticeship Career Class (TACC) is a state-certified, official pre-apprenticeship
- Seven weeks, including classroom instruction, hands-on training, field trips, green building, and fitness

What OTI Asks of Participants

- “Treat the class like you would a job. We evaluate you for work based on our short time with you.”
- “Be willing to accept feedback.”
- “So show up on time. We have a strict attendance policy.”
- “Work hard.”
- “Be an ally for other women going through the class.”
- “Commit to staying in contact with us after you graduate.”

Annual Results of OTI

- 1,500 women and girls come to OTI's Women in Trades Career Fair
- 900 women call OTI to find out about the trades
- 700 women come to OTI's orientations
- 180 women apply to enter OTI's program
- 96 women graduate
- 50 women entered trades job

Unique Curriculum Elements

1. Training at seven weeks is short + intense + compact
2. One-day-a-week of hands-on construction skills practice
3. One-day-a-week of field trips to construction job sites, employers, and apprenticeship programs
4. New eight-hour Green Building module, thanks to EPA
5. Strong after-class supports
6. Continuous improvement
7. Girls program feeds into pre-apprenticeship

Training For 7 Weeks/3 Days a Week Is Short + Intense + Compact

- Relatively inexpensive for OTI to run
- Therefore can be free for participants
- Women can fit it into their schedules

One-Day-a-Week of Hands-On Construction Skills Practice Builds Women's Comfort With Tools and Materials

- Run like a construction site
- Female instructors from industry also are role models
- 1-5 instructor/student ratio means lots of individual attention
- Weekly evaluation/feedback on student performance to industry standards
- Nonprofit job sites mean students give back to community

One-day-a-Week of Field Trips to Construction Job Sites, Employers, and Apprenticeship Programs

- Connects students to industry; familiarity = comfort level
- Reality check for industry conditions
- In-kind contribution from industry helps keep our costs low

Eight-Hour Green Building Module, Thanks to EPA

- New as of summer 2009, classroom components connected to field trips and hands-on practice:
  - **Introduction to green remediation and green building**
  - **Deconstruction and materials reuse**
  - **Identifying hidden hazards at Brownfield sites**
  - **Innovative storm water management, system designs, and construction**
  - **Conceptualizing, designing, and installing green and solar roofing systems**
  - **Weatherization and energy efficiency**

Full curriculum available upon request!

Strong After-Class Supports

- Funding for tools, boots, and childcare
- Networking for mentoring, job leads, and social support:
  - Class leaders, social hour, Facebook, volunteering, and policy advocacy
- Re-employment assistance

The Next Generation

- Women in Trades Career Fair
- Middle & High School Girls Construction Camps
- Building Girls Crew

TAC Class January 2009

Tara Webb, Electrical Apprentice

- Tara is a 27-year old Electrical Apprentice who has worked on wind farms and solar installations
- She entered Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.'s pre-apprenticeship program in August of 2006 after a couple of years of college and managing a bakery
- By November 2006, she was working as an electrical material handler, entering the apprenticeship program a year later in 2007

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