

# Engaging Green Jobs Employers and Training Programs in Tax Credit Outreach – Why It’s Important



## What are Green Jobs and Green Collar Jobs?

**G**reen jobs are jobs that contribute to greater environmental quality. Most green jobs in America can be found in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors which include, but are not limited to, weatherizing and retrofitting homes and commercial building units; conducting energy audits on businesses and homes; manufacturing solar panels; and servicing wind turbines. Another new term is “green collar job” which the Apollo Alliance defines as a “well-paid, career track job that contributes directly to preserving or enhancing environmental quality”.<sup>1</sup> Green collar jobs are designed to provide sustainable incomes and a career track for people with lower levels of education, typically people with more than a high school degree but less than a four year college degree. These occupations require skills from blue collar industries harnessed for the green economy.

With the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 devoting more than \$40 billion in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects — including \$500 million dollars for job training programs — more than two million green jobs workers should be able to find pathways to careers and higher paying jobs within the next two years.

## The Green Sector is Growing

Because the green sector is still developing, green jobs are part of a range of occupations and industries. However, most current green jobs and green collar jobs come from existing labor-intensive blue collar industries such as manufacturing, construction, maintenance and repair with a focus on the environment. Technologies included in green industries are energy efficiency, wind, solar, biofuel production and smart electricity grid construction. Many green collar jobs that evolve from existing construction and manufacturing occupations generally require less additional training, but green jobs using new technologies will require advanced training and certification. The additional skills needed are attainable through subsidized training programs, many of which are currently offered in local community colleges and certified training programs.

## Opportunities for Tax Credit Outreach Campaigns

Supporters have envisioned green collar jobs as “family supporting, career track jobs” able to provide a ‘pathway out of poverty’ for people in need.<sup>2</sup> Promoting the use of tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit and others to workers in the green sector or workers transitioning into this field is a way to realize this vision. Though green jobs are meant to provide higher wages, workers just starting out in green jobs may initially need an extra boost to their income to help them care for themselves and their families.

Tax Credit Outreach Campaigns can reach out to green sector workers earning lower wages by engaging employers in green industries as well as training programs based at community colleges and other institutions. Integrating information about the credits into materials and assistance provided to trainees and new hires can help make the new jobs more attractive. By helping new businesses promote the EIC, CTC and free tax filing sites community organizations can help play a role in the economic development of the community.

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<sup>1</sup> The Apollo Alliance is a coalition of labor, business, environmental, and community leaders working to catalyze a clean energy revolution that will put millions of Americans to work in a new generation of high-quality, green-collar jobs. For more information, visit its website at <http://www.apolloalliance.org/>.

<sup>2</sup> [www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/03/green\\_collar\\_jobs.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/03/green_collar_jobs.html)

## GREEN JOBS RESOURCES

*The following reports and articles provide information about the growing green jobs sector, funding sources for training programs, and the potential impact of green jobs on the economy and low-income communities.*

**Green Investments and the Labor Market: How Many Jobs Could be Generated and What Type? –**

[www.epi.org/page/-/pdf/ib253.pdf](http://www.epi.org/page/-/pdf/ib253.pdf)

**Bringing Home the Recovery: A User's Guide to the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act –**

[www.greenforall.org/resources/recoveryusersguide](http://www.greenforall.org/resources/recoveryusersguide)

**Green Jobs Programs to Drive Economic Recovery –**

[www.progressivestates.org/node/23193#3](http://www.progressivestates.org/node/23193#3)

**The Clean Energy Economy Report –**

[www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/Clean\\_Economy\\_Report\\_Web.pdf](http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/Clean_Economy_Report_Web.pdf)

**High Road or Low Road: Job Quality in the Green Economy –**

[www.apolloalliance.org/downloads/gjfgreenjobsrpt.pdf](http://www.apolloalliance.org/downloads/gjfgreenjobsrpt.pdf)