



Green Energy Council



Green Job Corps®

A new, multi-billion dollar economic sector is emerging, bringing new opportunities for American workers. It is called “Green Tech”. It is bringing new “green collar” jobs to American families.

What is a green collar job?

A green collar job can be determined as a vocational job in an ecologically responsible trade, for instance: installing solar panels, weatherizing buildings, constructing and maintaining wind farms, materials re-use and recycling, doing organic agriculture, etc.

Or, a green-collar job can be anything that helps put America on the path to a cleaner, more energy efficient future. That means jobs in the public transit sector, jobs in green building, jobs in energy efficiency and so on...

These new green jobs exist in: manufacturing, construction, operation and maintenance, and installation. Most require more education than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree. Some are a stepping stone to high-skill professional jobs or green entrepreneurial opportunities.

The shift from dirty energy sources, like oil and coal to cleaner energy sources like solar, wind, and bio fuels will produce hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

The work of retrofitting millions of buildings so that they conserve energy will produce still more jobs. Between now and 2030, 75% of the buildings in the U.S. will either be new or substantially rehabilitated.

Our inefficient, dangerously unstable electrical grid will also need to be overhauled. This alone is estimated to create over 5.6 million new jobs replacing over 160,000 linear miles of nineteenth century installed transmission lines.

And all of these jobs will be, by definition, impossible to outsource to other countries. Therefore, they can be determined as green collar jobs for America’s workforce families.

What remains to be seen is if the career ladders appearing in every sector of green tech, from green building to biofuel production, solar system installation and sustainable manufacturing of products, are available to all or to a select few.

How can a green collar job help save America's economy?

The middle-class ideal is tied to earning power, and it's there that confidence is degrading. Over the last six years, while most workers' incomes have increased slowly or not at all, costs have reached record levels. Housing costs are up 23 percent, college costs up 44 percent and health insurance costs up 71 percent.

And while the traditional economic outlook is bleak, the green economy is taking shape, bringing with it the promise of well-paying manufacturing jobs; of management and sales opportunities with huge growth potential and lots of new positions for enterprising students and job seekers looking for alternative careers.

On the upper rungs of the economic ladder, many CEOs and CFOs are already jumping into green jobs, and online green job postings are heavy with listings for those with established business experience.

Our country needs a new American Dream -- a green dream that includes everyone in our new vision of energy security and prosperity. As we evolve to meet the challenges presented by the global climate change, we have the opportunity to unite our nation around unprecedented labor mobilization and economic vitality.

Including renewable energy and clean technology, "green" is the fifth largest market sector in the United States.

The RAND Corporation and University of Tennessee found that if 25% of all American energy were produced from renewable sources by 2025, we would generate at least 5 million new green jobs.

We can create 5 million new jobs that will help conserve energy, promote the deployment of new technologies, and contribute to the mission of our ever-expanding movement to become a more sustainable nation. The **Green Jobs Corps®** will help lower barriers to new "green tech" trained workers, and help revitalize communities. This will result in an equitable transition away from a fossil fuel driven economy.

The renewable industry consistently produces more jobs per megawatt of electricity generated in construction, manufacturing, installation, operations and management and fuel processing than the fossil fuel industries.

The American Solar Energy Society estimated that in 2006 alone, renewable energy and energy efficiency were responsible for \$970 billion in industry revenues and 8.5 million jobs. This number will grow exponentially if our nation commits itself in earnest to reducing carbon emissions and training American workers in new twenty first century "green tech" jobs.

Unfortunately, America's growing green economy faces a looming labor shortage in sectors like manufacturing, construction and installation.

The National Renewable Energy Lab has identified a shortage of skills and training as a leading barrier to renewable energy and energy efficiency growth. This labor shortage is only likely to get more severe as baby-boomers skilled in current energy technologies retire; in the power sector, for example, nearly one-quarter of the current workforce will be eligible for retirement in the next five to seven years.

Clearly if America is to rise to the global energy challenge, and capture the economic opportunity it represents, we need to prepare the next generation of Americans for these new “green collar” jobs. Green jobs exist, and are growing, in a range of industries and at every skill and wage level.

The green economy has already opened doors for those in the upper echelon of the business world, the managers, directors, CEOs and CFOs.

Green jobs are the kind of family-supporting jobs that once anchored the American middle class, but in the industries of the future: industries like wind turbine manufacturing, solar panel manufacturing and installation, and sustainable green building and development.



Green Jobs Corps®

There are many ways to go about creating green jobs, and many benefits in the process. Fighting for green jobs means fighting for new jobs, but it also means retooling old jobs to fit the needs of the new economy.

While green collar jobs are often touted as a way to create a solid American workforce, it's the installation and maintenance jobs in solar and wind that can't be outsourced.

Green jobs are American jobs that can't be outsourced overseas, keeping our investment dollars in our nation. Green jobs are good jobs with opportunities for higher education and unionization, in communities that need that kind of opportunity.

By investing in federally funded green collar jobs programs, we can make a small investment go a long way. We can conserve energy, save taxpayers money, increase employment, and provide new investment opportunities in the booming clean technology sector.

The bottom line here is that a clean energy economy will stabilize our economy and our climate. We will have more jobs, less outsourcing, and less carbon in our atmosphere. Our future will be one that is more just, and more equitable, complete with green pathways out of poverty and truly equal opportunity.



URBAN GREEN JOB CORPS®

The economy needs laborers, but they need them in the right places – from the hills of Appalachia to the streets of the South Bronx.

This new green economy has the power to deliver new sources of work, wealth and health to low-income people - while honoring the Earth.

The march of globalization and the changing world economy ended inner city prosperity. As small businesses shut down and good manufacturing jobs disappeared, there weren't many jobs left.

It is very clear that moving away from polluting work and towards environmentally restorative work will bring significant changes and immediate benefits to workers, communities, and society at large. We need to develop a clearer understanding of what kinds of policies and programs can ensure that green collar jobs are made available to workers with limited initial education and skills, and that these jobs are stable, living wage jobs that provide benefits to workers and their families.

The Green Energy Council's **Urban Green Job Corps®** believes that green jobs will become a means to help workers and low-income people get in on the ground floor of this booming sector of the U.S. economy.

Urban Green Job Corps® will say to America's workers, particularly those in urban and rural underserved communities, that there is a place for them in the green economy.

It is critical for America to use green collar jobs both as a way to curb global warming and create perfect entry level or transitional jobs for urban residents looking for a pathway out of poverty.

The Green Jobs Act, which passed the House as part of the Energy Bill in 2007 with a vote of 241 to 172, contains specific language about using the green economy as a “pathway out of poverty.” Of the \$125 million that would be set aside for job training in renewable energy, energy-efficient vehicles and green building, \$25 million of that would be earmarked specifically for those most difficult to hire: at-risk youths, former inmates and welfare recipients. The Energy Savings Act of 2007 sponsored by Bernie Sanders (D-VT) and Hilary Clinton (D-NY) in the Senate allows for \$100 million in training for “green-collar jobs,” but is not geared specifically toward low-income Americans. We need to make sure that America’s urban centers can utilize some of these funds to finally release themselves from the shackles of poverty and oppression stemmed from the lack of good quality jobs within these urban centers.

The Green Jobs Act is a way of repurposing our job training.

The Urban Green Job Corps® will create opportunities in this new green economy for poor people through policy advocacy, public outreach, and an employment pipeline.

The movement to make American cities more sustainable, efficient and livable is perhaps the greatest new engine for urban economic growth, innovation and job creation in many decades.

Urban Green Jobs can be utilized as a path to economic and social recovery for low-income communities.

The Urban Green Job Corps® will prioritize facilitating opportunities to those who are usually considered "hard to employ" such as at-risk youth and people who are underemployed, low-income, or those who have been formerly-incarcerated.

Correctional facilities all across America should utilize the vast amounts of real estate necessary by law for security as hybrid alternative energy and green tech job training facilities. Training inmates in new green tech jobs by providing them on the job training while they:

- build utility scale rooftop solar installations
- erect wind turbines
- plant biofuel crops and refineries to fuel onsite correctional facility vehicles and generators
- install and maintain CHP plants
- build and maintain biomass facilities

A Societal Dilemma

Currently, unemployment rates for African American adults and teenagers are more than double the rates for Whites and Asians. Among Latinos, unemployment is worsening among second-generation Latinos.

Although the overall employment rate for Latinos is equal to Whites and Asians, the unemployment rate among native born Latinos is almost twice as high as Whites. Although Asians have lower unemployment rates, Asian workers are concentrated in low-paying manufacturing and service jobs and, like African Americans and Latinos, their rates of poverty are significantly higher than Whites.

What is clear is that people of color and high school graduates are the least advantaged groups in the current labor market. In order to reduce the potential for social inequalities and injustices in the emerging green economy, we need to develop strategies and programs to ensure that workers with limited initial education and skills have access to local green collar jobs. **Urban Green Job Corps®** will be helpful as it takes on this challenge along with our synergy organization partners.

Employers describe basic work skills of being responsible, being on time, having good communication skills, etc. as the most critical skills for the green jobs they offer. Employers are willing to hire workers with limited initial education and skills.

The **Urban Green Job Corps®** will educate this new workforce to meet these immediate needs first.

The **Urban Green Job Corps®** will also at the same time work with potential employers to ensure that the green collar jobs that they provide workers with are stable living-wage jobs with benefits, we will do this by supporting living-wage ordinances, long-term hiring contracts, and unionization options.

Secondly, **Urban Green Job Corps®** will work to ensure that green collar jobs are offered to workers with limited initial education and skills, we will strive for local hiring requirements, training for green collar jobs in high schools, work force training programs, certification programs, matching programs, and employer incentives.

Unless the green economy is designed to include America's urban youth, they are bound to be overlooked, shuffled back into the same low-wage, go-nowhere retail and fast food jobs with little opportunity for improvement.

Through the existing Green Energy Council Educational Initiative, we will work with High School chapters of the GEC to ensure that Vo Tech programs evolve to begin training our students in new twenty first century green tech jobs.

Specifically, **Urban Green Job Corps®** will offer guidance on how cities can link residents to green-collar jobs that are family-supporting jobs in all industries. The Green Energy Council hopes it will help cities across America develop strategies to expand their green economies and initiatives, and help provide an energy secure and fossil fuel independent future.

Our hope is that the **Urban Green Job Corps®** could ensure a place for America's disadvantaged and disenfranchised in the new green economy.

Green Jobs Corps® Implementation Plan

The **Green Job Corps.®** is a way to solve two of the nation's biggest problems: failing American job security and global climate security. The **Green Job Corps.®** will help give U.S. workers (and would-be workers) access to the skills they will need to compete in the new green job market.

The Green Energy Council will call upon all non profits, non government agencies and existing government programs to compliment the **Green Job Corps.®**

There are many existing programs that can evolve themselves to become facilitation tools for new green tech job training.

There are vocational training centers, return-from-prison work centers and community college programs.

The **Green Job Corps.®** will reach out to both recent college graduates and professionals looking to redirect their careers who are searching to find ways to plug into this new green economy.

The task will not be easy. Many eco-entrepreneurs fear that their growth will be constrained by a "green collar" labor shortage -- unless there is a major increase in the quantity and quality of vocational job training.

There are several strategies that must be identified. One is to look at what skills are needed by all industries to solve environmental problems.

All industries will need information management and financing. This opens up jobs like sector analysts, green accountants, government finance officers and foundation managers, among others.

Another strategy for Green Job Corps® is to help workers investigate the major sources of carbon emissions—power plants, automobiles, gas flares—and focus on finding solutions within these polluting industries.

A New Economy

Climate Change is shaping up to be the biggest environmental strategy issue the business world has ever faced.

The Business World and the natural world are inexplicably linked.

Looking at all the ways environmental issues affect a business can frame thinking and strategy in a new way.

No company can afford to ignore green issues. Those that manage them with skill will build stronger, more profitable, longer lasting businesses and a healthier more livable planet.

Companies that feel that they can dive beneath the “green” wave, submerging themselves in the hope that it will pass, will be disappointed by it’s enduring presence and pounding tenacity.

More corporations are going "green" and discovering that helping the environment isn't the only payoff. Eco-friendly policies can also help companies attract young talent, increase productivity and reduce costs.

Private corporations will have to pitch in too. If U.S. green industries are going to compete and cooperate on the world stage, they will need the support of a well-trained, world-class green workforce. A **Green Job Corps®** workforce!

Here in America we are in an economic race for the jobs of the next century.

The greening of the United States economy means that every job that contributes to a low carbon future should be considered a green job. This effort needs to be nurtured. It can be done. It must be done. America can reclaim economic prosperity. We can and will lead the World by our actions. We have done it before and we must do it again.

We retooled United States manufacturing plants within four months of the United States entering World War 2. We liberated the World in 4 years. We must now save our planet over the next ten years. We can and we will show the World that here in America is where the brightest minds and the most skilled workers on the Planet decided to save the Planet and regain our global economic leadership at the same time.

Our Nation must take advantage of this new green economy because if we fail, America will have squandered a huge opportunity to both save our environment for future generations as well as an opportunity for creating millions of new jobs in this new "green" world.

--The National Green Energy Council