



JOB CORPS'

# R&R Field Report

Aiding in America's Recovery and Reinvesting in Our Future



ARRA E-Newsletter Volume 24

## From the National Office of Job Corps

Dear Job Corps Staff,

As we wrap up the last few editions of the Job Corps R&R Field Report, I want to highlight many of our accomplishments since receiving ARRA funds in June 2009. The following articles illustrate how ARRA projects have touched so many areas of our program. We have been able to update our training curricula, make our centers more sustainable, and increase awareness of the need for greater energy-efficiency – all while creating economic opportunities in communities across the nation.

From construction projects, both large and small, to impressive Career Technical Student Training (CTST) projects like greenhouses and solar panel installation, to new training curricula and equipment, to centerwide green culture implementation, these funds have enabled us to improve our centers coast to coast. Job Corps has always been one of the best training programs in the country, and now it is even better ... and more sustainable.

We will have the opportunity to review our many ARRA accomplishments when the E-Report is introduced in the coming weeks in the final edition the R&R Field Report. The Job Corps ARRA E-Report will be an interactive Web site that gives a comprehensive overview on how Job Corps used its ARRA funds.

Also, coming soon is a new Job Corps National E-Newsletter. This E-Newsletter will continue to highlight our successes and cover topics beyond Job Corps' ARRA projects. So stay tuned for even more exciting program news to be shared very soon.

I hope you are still as impressed with our tremendous efforts and teamwork as I continue to be. Thanks again for helping make Job Corps such a great program.

Sincerely,

Edna Primrose  
National Director



## Construction Projects Improve Efficiency at Job Corps Centers Across the Country

The Cassadaga Job Corps Center, in Cassadaga, N.Y., completed a major renovation of its Culinary Arts building, refurbishing features from the ground up that improve its appearance and its functionality. Building improvements include new brickwork, drywall, and ceilings, as well as energy-saving features such as high-efficiency HVAC systems, windows, and lighting fixtures. The new design will also help the center withstand the harsh winter weather conditions in the area.



Culinary Arts students at Cassadaga Job Corps Center practice their skills by preparing food for a demonstration.

Renovation contractor Chris Nichter of Nichter Construction saw the project through from start to finish, and knows firsthand how each of the new features will better serve the student population. "The old structure was very weak," Nichter said. "Now the building is completely renovated with significant upgrades, and it is very comfortable for the students who will use the building for training classes day in and day out."

The Westover Job Corps Center, in Chicopee, Mass., is working with local contractors on the construction of approximately 1.5 acres of stationary, ground-based solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. Once the solar panels are installed, the new system will serve as an alternative energy source that will decrease the center's dependency on outside power sources. The panels will add 150 to 200 kilowatts to the center's current power system.

The center and contractors are also working to identify training opportunities for students during the installation of the panels, a prime opportunity for students to learn more about emerging technologies and energy-efficiency in the construction industry.

Westover hired Massachusetts-based Palmer Federal Constructors to complete the solar panel installation, enhancing the local economic impact of the project. The contractor is tasked with designing and constructing the ground-based solar panel system and is currently working with the center to prepare for installation. Numerous site visits have been completed, and the solar panels have arrived on center. Currently, the center is working with the contractor on the beginning stages of the project that will continue through spring 2011.

Job Corps received more than \$211 million in ARRA funds for the construction of new facilities and renovations of existing structures. These projects have been a significant factor in Job Corps' ability to commit to the goals put forth by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

To learn more about Cassadaga's renovation project, [watch this video](#).



## Muhlenberg Job Corps Center Is Still Thriving on Green Culture

Last April, eight students from the Muhlenberg Job Corps Center, in Greenville, Ky., traveled to Washington, D.C., to accept the National Green Center Recognition Award. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis recognized these students and other Muhlenberg representatives for the center's outstanding efforts in energy and water conservation, installation of energy-efficient materials, and green student training projects.



Muhlenberg Job Corps Center students Micka Blair and Orlando Mitchell hang a shadowbox which contains the center's 2010 National Green Center Recognition Award.

Center Director Kenny Brown, who accompanied the students on the trip, said at the time, "This experience has taught our students that environmental awareness is a lifestyle commitment. It's my hope that Muhlenberg will continue to serve as an environmental ambassador for the Job Corps program and for our greater community."

One year later, it's safe to say Mr. Brown's hope has become a reality. When the eight students returned from Washington, they brought with them a renewed commitment to energy-efficiency and sustainability, which they fervently passed along to the rest of the center. By the end of 2010, Muhlenberg had saved approximately \$77,000 on gas, electricity, and water as a result of its energy-efficient upgrades.

The center is now accustomed to huge energy savings from its low-voltage lights; reinforced insulation; 85 new double-pane windows and 94 new doors with insulating sweeps; low-flow toilets, showerheads, and washing machines; instant, tankless water heaters; and new HVAC units. But all this new equipment has only done so much to instill a culture of environmental awareness on center. The rest has been up to the students and staff, led by the Student Government Association (SGA) and the center's Green Committee.

Every building on center contains a 55-gallon recycling container, and drains have been installed around several buildings to collect water, which is then used to irrigate flowerbeds, saving the center an estimated 13,440 gallons of water per year. The SGA also mandates that programmable thermostats be set to 68 degrees during the winter and 75 degrees during the summer.

In addition to these efforts, no project has been more indicative of Muhlenberg's innovative approach to sustainability than its move to a tray-less food system in the cafeteria. The center no longer needs to use water, electricity or cleaning chemicals to wash 1,215 trays every day. As a result, the center saves approximately 73,913 gallons of water, 47,450 kilowatts of electricity, and 156 gallons of cleaning chemicals per year. All of those savings might have been expected, but what wasn't expected was the drastic reduction in wasted food after the tray removal.

Now that students and staff can only take as much food as they can fit on one plate, wasted food is down about 30 percent per person, per day. Over the course of an entire year, that amounts to 130 pounds of food per person that is no longer going to waste.

The center estimates that the tray-less food system is saving a total of more than \$50,000 per year. It's just one of many green initiatives that have taken hold at the Muhlenberg Job Corps Center. Although several of the students who accepted the National Green Center Recognition Award last year have graduated and moved on, their enthusiasm for environmental awareness and sustainability is still thriving on center.

To see more photos of Muhlenberg's projects, click [here](#).

To learn more about Muhlenberg's tray-less system, [watch this video](#).



## ARRA Technological and Equipment Upgrades

While the majority of ARRA funds were dedicated to large construction projects like new dorms, new vocational buildings, and countless energy-efficient renovations to many Job Corps centers, sustainability was also achieved behind the scenes with the purchase of electric vehicles, training simulators, and new computers.

### **Electric Vehicles**

Sixteen centers in the Atlanta Region received \$828,800 to purchase electric vehicles and are using the smaller, low-speed utility vehicles for daily tasks like security-patrols. Larger, electric-powered vehicles like trucks and vans are used for transporting students, maintenance materials, and training supplies around campuses.

Electric vehicles are also helping centers reduce fuel costs. Overall, Job Corps is hoping to save \$3 million to \$5 million in fuel costs alone by 2012 – following full implementation of all electric vehicles.

For example, Job Corps centers in the Atlanta Region and throughout the country are maximizing the use of electric vehicles by replacing gas-powered cars that were once used for security-patrols and other various maintenance tasks around campuses with energy-efficient models like GEM cars, vans, and trucks.



The Turner Job Corps Center uses electric vehicles like these vans to transport maintenance materials on center, reducing the cost of fuel and automobile maintenance to center vehicles.

Click [here](#) to see a variety of Job Corps' electric vehicles.

### **Training Simulators**

New training devices such as welding and driver training simulators are also helping reduce fuel consumption and eliminating the wear and tear of GSA vehicles.

Specifically, 10 centers in the Atlanta Region received \$194,230 to purchase simulators, allowing students to train year-round and gain exposure to unexpected scenarios – making them better, more prepared drivers.

Students at the Turner Job Corps Center, in Albany, Ga., are learning safe driving techniques while practicing in various weather conditions like snow, ice, and heavy wind – conditions that may not be typical in Georgia, but still important for students to learn how to cope with if necessary. By utilizing driving simulators, Job Corps centers are giving students valuable driving experience while also reducing fuel costs and driver education automobile maintenance.



Heavy Equipment simulators provide Job Corps students with additional training opportunities and are more energy-efficient.

Click [here](#) to see pictures of Job Corps students and instructors using training simulators.

#### New PCs

Job Corps used ARRA funds to purchase 11,028 new PCs to replace older models. In the Atlanta Region, 13 centers purchased 1,539 new, energy-efficient computers that meet Federal Desktop Core Configuration, Energy Star, and EPEAT requirements.

Click [here](#) to see pictures of Job Corps students using these new PCs at centers in the Atlanta Region.



## Albuquerque JCC Grads Prove Worth of New TARs

For more than 3 years, the Albuquerque Job Corps Center has partnered with [CLP Resources, Inc.](#) – a national skilled trade staffing company with an office in Albuquerque, N.M. – to connect students with work-based learning projects and to place graduates in productive careers. Last year, when CLP needed to send 180 skilled workers to Springer, N.M., to work on a 364-acre, 30-megawatt solar power project, 48 Job Corps graduates made the trip.

When a 5-megawatt solar power installation project came up in Albuquerque to provide supplemental energy for [PNM](#) – New Mexico's largest utility provider – 25 of the 35 workers on site were Job Corps graduates who had worked the Springer job.

“Because of the success we had with the Job Corps graduates on the Springer project, and how impressed we were with their production levels, Job Corps was the first call I made to recruit workers,” said Ken Romero, trade recruiter for CLP's Albuquerque office. “The skills they are being taught at Job Corps are the foundation for doing this type of work.”

In 2009, when 76 new Training Achievement Records (TARs) were developed as part of Job Corps' Green Collar Training Initiative, the Albuquerque Center integrated the upgrades into its Construction career pathway – specifically its Carpentry, Electrical, and Welding career technical training areas.

The new TARs were developed by workgroups composed of industry experts, environmental-accreditation agencies, and Job Corps instructors and managers.

The Springer and Albuquerque projects required carpenters, concrete masons, electricians, and welders. Because the Albuquerque Center adopted these new TARs and trains in all of these areas, the graduates were eligible to apply for the cutting-edge, solar power installation projects and excelled at them.

To hear Ken Romero from CLP discuss his experience working with Job Corps graduates, [watch this video](#).



## St. Louis Job Corps Center Makes Aquaponics/Hydroponics Greenhouse a Part of Center Training Culture

A greenhouse at the St. Louis Job Corps Center, in St. Louis, Mo., provides students with a variety of opportunities to learn about energy-efficient systems in heating, cooling, ventilation, and water usage, as well as energy production and the life cycle of plants – experiences that can help students break into urban agriculture, a growing field in Missouri.

Carpentry, Cement Masonry, Facilities Maintenance, Home Building Institute (HBI), and Welding students participated in all facets of the project – from the initial groundbreaking and construction to building the hydroponic and aquaponic systems, to installing the electrical, solar, and wind equipment that power and control the heat for the greenhouse. The hydroponic and aquaponic systems work together to sustain temperatures for growing vegetables such as tomatoes, lettuce, and onions. The aquaponic system includes live fish that eat algae, and their waste helps fertilize the water for the plants.

Culinary Arts and HBI students will be involved in the care of the fish and the vegetables. The greenhouse vegetables will be used in Culinary Arts classes, and excess produce will be donated to neighboring food banks.



While helping build the center's greenhouse complex, students at the St. Louis Job Corps Center received essential hands-on training experience and learned valuable lessons in green construction.

The greenhouse also will be used as a teaching aid for biology classes in the center's high school diploma classes. The center is partnering with Lincoln University's Cooperative Extension Urban Impact Center, in St. Louis, Mo., to give students advanced training opportunities in agribusiness. Students who complete the advanced training option at the St. Louis Center can receive certifications in water testing, food product transportation, and agribusiness through the university.

To see photos of the greenhouse complex, click [here](#).

To watch a video of an HBI student discussing her involvement with the greenhouse, click [here](#).



## Job Corps ARRA-Funded Projects Stimulate Local Economies

Funding for a new dormitory construction project at Columbia Basin Job Corps Center, in Moses Lake, Wash., came at an opportune time for the center and local contractors. The \$7.3 million project, expected to be complete in May, has helped save jobs for local companies.

"All the subcontractors we hired for this project are local to the Washington area," said Bill Dieter, a project director for general contractor Au Authum Ki, Inc. "Based on their eagerness to get started and get to work, the different subcontractors may not necessarily have had to hire people; but they've got people on their payroll that they want to keep employed and keep working."



Students at the Columbia Basin Center are excited to move into the new dorm and enjoy its updated features.

Several hundred miles across the country, in Ottumwa, Iowa, construction on the new Ottumwa Job Corps Center has pumped more than \$24 million into the local economy. More than 100 jobs will be created in the Ottumwa community when Job Corps' newest center opens in 2011. Hundreds more were supported during the construction phase.

Randy Houk had been laid off by his previous employer and was out of work before being hired by Grooms & Company Construction to work on the Ottumwa Job Corps Center.

"The Ottumwa Job Corps Center got me a job, which hopefully will result in a future job with this company," Houk said in a July 2010 interview. "I've been working since last October, and I'm proud of the job we're doing."



The new Ottumwa Job Corps Center will create more than 100 local jobs when it opens later this year.

The Ottumwa Job Corps Center will continue to be a leading economic engine in the community long after the construction is complete. Staff salaries, equipment, and supplies will inject about \$8 million into the local economy annually. Center graduates will also be a source of trained employees for local businesses and industries.

To see more photos of the Columbia Basin dorm and new Ottumwa center, click [here](#).

To hear contractors discuss more about the economic impact of these projects, watch these videos:

[Columbia Basin video](#) | [Ottumwa video](#)

Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, Job Corps is the nation's largest career technical training and education program for students ages 16 through 24. Job Corps is a U.S. Department of Labor Equal Opportunity Program.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

TDD/TTY telephone number is (877) 889-5627.