



Supporting Success: Making the Transition to Green Collar Jobs

Report from the Workshop

Summer 2010



**Supporting Success:
Making the Transition to Green Collar Jobs**

Report from the Workshop

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Executive Summary

MillionTreesNYC is a citywide, public-private initiative with an ambitious goal: to plant and care for one million new trees across New York City's five boroughs by 2017. As a component of the initiative, the MillionTreesNYC Training Program (MTTP) offers experiential learning in tree care/arboriculture, ecological restoration, and landscape design and gardening/horticulture. The program specifically targets low income, 18 to 24 year olds who have been previously disconnected from the workforce and provides training in specific professional skills needed for sustainable employment in the five boroughs.

The 30 June 2010 workshop "*Supporting Success: Making the Transition to Green Collar Jobs*" convened more than 50 MTTP trainers, employers, educators, New York City policymakers, and others to discuss the program, its successes, and ways it can be improved. The workshop was organized by MTTP with funding support from the USDA Forest Service Civil Rights Special Project Fund. Agendas, participants and other materials are included as Appendices.

The workshop addressed two central questions: (1) how can the MTTP produce better candidates and better employees for the jobs and (2) how to better support new workers once they graduate from the program? Workshop activities included:

- (1) Introductory presentations by NYC officials and MTTP staff;
- (2) A panel discussion among thought leaders, including academics and government officials with expertise in the fields of labor and workforce

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development, public health, youth development, social services, and sociology;

- (3) Three breakout discussion groups along with a presentation of the results of these discussions; and
- (4) A keynote address by NYC Housing Authority Commissioner Margarita Lopez.

Overarching conclusions of the workshop were:

- (1) There is much enthusiasm for the goals and programs of MTTP;
- (2) The most common difficulties experienced by trainees and employers involve "soft skills", including expectations for appropriate workplace behavior (e.g., attendance, timeliness);
- (3) A variety of improvements to MTTP training are recommended and attainable, included strengthened emphasis on accountability (e.g., using rotating group leadership), certain technical skills (e.g., basic computer skills and math), creation of peer groups and alumni associations to serve as mentors, and follow-up with trainees after job placement; and
- (4) Given the issues of multi-generational structural poverty, the shortcomings of the K-12 educational system, and often hidden but pervasive mental health problems, the challenges facing this target population are significant. At the same time, the job training and employment is potentially transformational for this population.

More information about MillionTreesNYC Training Program can be found at http://www.milliontreesnyc.org/html/programs/training_programs.shtml

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Acknowledgements

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The MillionTreesNYC Training Program is directed by Brian Aucoin. MillionTreesNYC is directed for NYC Parks & Recreation by Morgan Monaco. MillionTreesNYC is directed for NYRP by Faisal Al-Juburi. Thanks to the USDA Forest Service Civil Rights Special Project Fund for providing funding for this event.

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Introduction

The improvement of training and support of trainees in their transition to green jobs was the core purpose of the workshop “Supporting Success: Making the Transition to Green Collar Jobs”, held in New York City on 30 June 2010. As the MillionTreesNYC Training Program (MTTP) enters its fourth training cycle, it continues to explore, self-evaluate, and seek greater insight into the issues surrounding the transition out of unemployment and into the green workforce. This discussion served to inform the MTTP staff as well as employers of program graduates on the challenges they face, and steps required to make a successful and sustainable transition from poverty and public assistance to long term, self-sustaining green jobs.

It is for these purposes that MTTP staff and employers convened with academics, NGO's, policymakers, and others to study and discuss how MTTP can be improved and strengthened for the benefit of MillionTreesNYC and all New Yorkers.

PlaNYC

PlaNYC 2030 is a comprehensive plan of 127 initiatives launched in 2007 and designed to support the long-term sustainability of New York City. PlaNYC began as an attempt to develop a strategy for managing the city's growing needs within a limited amount of land as the city's population was projected to increase by another million people by 2030. The challenge was to develop a coherent, holistic plan that addressed systemic problems stemming from an embattled and underserved environment and an aging and deteriorating infrastructure, while at the same time preparing to meet the challenge of global climate change. Focusing on the five key dimensions of the city's environment – land, air, water, energy and transportation – PlaNYC is the most sweeping plan to strengthen New York's urban environment in the city's modern history. MillionTreesNYC is one of the initiatives being implemented by NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) under PlaNYC 2030.

New York City has less open space per person than almost any other major city in America. Despite the addition of more than 300 acres of new parkland in the last five years, access to open space for all New Yorkers remains a challenge. With the vision and resources provided by PlaNYC, NYC Parks has launched the most ambitious parks program in half a century, creating new open spaces, and expanding and restoring the city's urban forest and natural resources. The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) is responsible for several PlaNYC initiatives in addition to MillionTreesNYC. One of these initiatives is to create more open spaces, ensuring that all New Yorkers live within a 10-minute walk of a park. This initiative includes efforts to transform schoolyards to playgrounds, replacing asphalt fields with turf, developing lighting for existing recreational fields and creating several new regional parks throughout the city. To

date, the following has been accomplished: 149 schoolyards have been opened to the public with the help of Parks and Department of Education staff, students and surrounding community; eight asphalt fields have been converted to turf; and five regional parks are projected to be in construction by the end of 2010.

History, Purpose and Design of MillionTreesNYC

MillionTreesNYC is a citywide, public-private initiative between the NYC Parks and the New York Restoration Project (NYRP). The initiative carries an ambitious goal: to plant and care for one million new trees across the city's five boroughs by 2017. Entire neighborhoods throughout New York City are being transformed into beautiful greenscapes. The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks) is planting 600,000 trees on streets, parks and other public spaces. NYRP is planting approximately 100,000 trees on public housing campuses, schoolyards, playgrounds, cultural institutions and other properties that are accessible to the public. NYRP also seeks to galvanize non-profit and community organizations, homeowners, landowners and developers to plant the remaining 300,000 on private properties throughout the city.

Launched on 9 October 2007 by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, MillionTreesNYC has so far planted over 376,000 trees throughout New York City, exceeding planting projections by 20%. Also launched was the MillionTreesNYC Stewardship Corps program, developed to engage New Yorkers in the care and maintenance of all newly planted trees. The MillionTreesNYC initiative has received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Home Depot Foundation, Toyota, BNP Paribas, the rock band The Police, and numerous other donors.

Focusing on communities with low tree canopy and high rates of respiratory illness has been a priority for MillionTreesNYC from the start. Tree planting was prioritized in six "Trees for Public Health" (TPH) neighborhoods across the city. To date, the Parks Department has fully stocked street trees in four out of six TPH neighborhoods: Far Rockaway,

"These young Americans will embark on careers in the growing field of urban natural resource management and restoration and help show others that green jobs programs can be a path out of poverty."

--Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack

In April 2009, the US Department of Agriculture announced a \$2 million grant to create green jobs and restore urban forests in New York City. Specifically the grant will create up to 20 new jobs in horticulture and forestry over the next two years for graduates of MTTP.

Queens, Stapleton, Staten Island, East Harlem, Manhattan, and Morrisania, in the Bronx. Tree plantings in Hunt's Point, Bronx and East New York, Brooklyn are forthcoming.

MillionTreesNYC Training Program

The MillionTreesNYC Training Program (MTTP) is a collaborative initiative between NYC Parks and NYRP. The program is a 7-month course of training that is specifically designed to teach, educate, and motivate young adults to become more aware and proactive in the wellness of the environment while jointly gaining employment and life skills. The program offers both human and environmental benefits; preparing participants for green-collar jobs ushering in a future of increased sustainability.

MTTP offers intensive training and experiential learning in three specific fields:

- Arboriculture
- Ecological Restoration
- Garden Restoration and Design

The program specifically targets low income, 18 to 24 year olds who have been previously disconnected from the workforce. It provides participants with training in specific professional skills needed to achieve sustainable employment in the five boroughs.

A portrait of MTTP and trainees

- Three classes have graduated (as of August 2010)
- Trainees: 73% Black, 27% Hispanic
- Trainees: 64% Female, 46% Male
- Completion rate: 84%
- Trainees who earned a Driver's Licenses during the program: 42%
- Rate of post-training employment: 82%

MTTP Arboriculture Track: This field works with the Forestry Divisions of NYC Parks, Central Park Conservancy and the Prospect Park Alliance to prune, climb and care for trees. It puts to work acquired tree stewardship, pruning and planting techniques, as well as tree identification and inspection skills.

MTTP Ecological Restoration Track: This field works with the Natural Resources Group, NYC Parks, Central Park Conservancy and the Prospect Park Alliance in the protection, restoration and management of natural areas of NYC. Projects include erosion control, manual and chemical aquatic and terrestrial invasive plant removal, and green roof installation. The Ecological Restoration Track also supports community-led or sponsored restoration, greening and cleanup projects.

MTTP Garden Restoration/Landscape Design Track: This field assists in executing MillionTreesNYC community planting strategies through site surveying, tree and materials procurement, site preparation, planting,

outreach and stewardship activities. The Garden Restoration/Landscape Design Track also develops and executes best practices of landscape design and planting standards - Visions of Horticulture - for the New York Restorations Project's 57 community gardens.

MTTP also provides a host of top quality technical training by which each trainee is certified. Trainings and Certifications include:

- 108-hour Continuing Education credits from New York Botanical Garden
- Trees New York Citizen Pruner and Climber/Pruner Certificates
- Pesticide/Herbicide Application
- Apprentice NYC DEC
- Master Compost Training Certificate from the NYC Compost Project

Throughout the seven months of green job training, trainees are also engaged in Life Skills Training. This includes developing skills related to the practices of Healthy Living, Time Management, Financial Planning, and Customer Service/Conflict Resolution. MTTP believes that Life Skills Training, in addition to the Green Field Technical training, will build up the trainee and develop them into a well-rounded individual for their future career path.

MTTP also offers Driver's License Education through which young adults train to receive their Drivers license and/or Commercial Drivers License.

Structure of the Workshop

The workshop addressed two central questions: (1) how can MTTP produce better candidates for available jobs and better employees; and (2) how can new workers be better supported by MTTP and employers? The day brought together MTTP trainers, employers, educators, trainees, government officials, and others to discuss the goals of MTTP, its successes, and ways in which it can be improved. There were four primary sections of the agenda.

- (1) Introductory comments to the event and MTTP by Susan Donoghue (Assistant Commissioner for Sustainability Initiatives), Brian Aucoin (Director of the Green Apple Corps and MillionTreesNYC Training Program), and Morgan Monaco (Director of MillionTreesNYC) outlined the context, history, goals, and performance of the training program, emphasizing both its successes and the potential for improvements.
- (2) A panel discussion among academics, educators, and government officials, followed by general Q&A, featured dialog on the need for a broad perspective in the design of effective training programs that recognize

education, intergenerational poverty, mental health, and career development. The panel was moderated by Commissioner Lilliam Barrios-Paoli (NYC Dept for the Aging) and included Nicole Lavan (Senior Policy Analyst Child Welfare and Workforce Development Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies), Kathryn Salisbury (Chief Program Officer Mental Health Association), Grace Protos (Regional Administrator Women's Bureau Region II, US Department of Labor), and Dr. L'Heureux Lewis (Professor of Sociology and Black Studies, City College of New York).

- (3) Breakout discussion groups in three topic areas (see the **Text Box** to the right), followed by a group discussion in plenary. The three topic areas for Breakout discussion groups were designed to reflect specific areas of need for improving training with MTTP programs as well as key issues in supporting the successful transition out of poverty. For each topic, a moderated session convened

Three topic areas around which breakout discussion groups were formed

- **Supporting Economic Mobility**

Training programs involve a transformation. Although most trainees change tremendously throughout the course of the program, they may still lack the experience or comprehensive skills to succeed in a full time job. How can trainees be set up for independence from social services? How can training programs support their independence after they have left the training program and entered the workforce? How can training programs better bridge the gap between poverty situations and economically sustaining jobs?

- **Workplace Issues**

Workplace environments and the employers that manage them typically have expectations for professional behavior and language. Yet for various reasons some trainees may have little experience with or lack comprehensive knowledge of this behavior. What specific areas of professionalism do trainees and employers find most troublesome? How can green job training programs improve their curricula to mitigate these issues?

- **Education**

Education is a key vehicle for pathways out of poverty, success in jobs, and sustained career advancement. Employers often need specific qualities and skills in their employees. How can we better prepare trainees by identifying which skills are desired by employers and which skills are mostly commonly lacking among students? How can educational achievement be encouraged?

employers, trainers, policymakers, and others in a discussion of what MTTP could do to achieve sustainable success in the workplace. Each group had several annotated lists to create as products of their discussion. Details of these products are discussed in the following sections.

- (4) The day closed with a keynote address by Ms. Margarita Lopez, New York City Housing Authority Commissioner. Lopez described the far-reaching sustainability policies that the country's largest public housing authority is putting in place. NYCHA's policies bring dual attention to environmental conservation through infrastructural improvements and social justice through local job development.

Appendices to this document contain the full agenda (**Appendix A**), and the roster of participants (**Appendix B**).

Results

Detailed results are discussed in subsequent sections for the panel and each breakout group. Overarching conclusions of the workshop were as follows.

- (1) There is much enthusiasm for the goals and programs of MTTP and green jobs training programs in general. MTTP staff and employers are generally satisfied with the goals and progress of the program, now beginning its third year and fourth class. Employers expressed some frustrations, but the issues are largely within reach of certain program improvements.
- (2) The most common difficulties experienced by trainees and employers involve "soft skills", including expectations for appropriate workplace behavior (e.g., attendance, timeliness). This is perhaps to be expected, since the trainees often have little previous job experience. However, such patterns of behavior can be disruptive in the workplace, cause employer and employee frustrations, and lead to lower job retention. The primary overarching goal of

Overarching Results

- (1) There is much enthusiasm for the goals and programs of MTTP and green jobs training programs in general
- (2) The most common difficulties experienced by trainees and employers involve "soft skills", including expectations for appropriate workplace behavior
- (3) A variety of improvements to MTTP training are recommended and attainable: emphasis on accountability and workplace behavior, post-graduation support for trainees, increased math and computer training, and language training

MTTP is to help trainees achieve sustainable success in the workplace. Understanding the patterns of success and failure in the workplace will help MTTP design training and post-training follow-up so as to maximize the chances of long-term success for all program participants.

(3) A variety of improvements to MTTP training are recommended and attainable.
These include:

- (A) Strengthened training emphasis on accountability, timeliness, and appropriate workplace behavior.
- (B) Training in workplace behavior could be improved by increased use of mentorships (e.g., alumni mentoring trainees), rotating team leaders during training (so each trainee gets experience in a leadership role), and increased follow-up with trainees after they are placed in jobs.
- (C) Increased emphasis on long-term support of trainees (post-graduation from the program), in order to help support sustainable transitions out of poverty and address on-going issues in the workplace. Such post-graduation support should be primarily directed at the now-employed trainees, but may also support employers. The exact nature of such post-graduation support needs to be determined.
- (D) Certain technical and academic skills are needed in jobs that trainees are not necessarily receiving in or retaining from standard school experiences. These include basic computer skills (e.g., spreadsheets in MS Excel and text documents in Word), training in the construction of basic e-mail messages, and, for some jobs, basic mathematics (e.g., for jobs involving pesticide applications). MTTP must investigate which of these skills can be included in the training program, and which require outside programs or a General Education Development (GED) program. MTTP currently provides these trainings.
- (E) Language training may be useful for some trainees, including English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.

Next Steps

The workshop is intended to be the first step in a continuing process to understand and improve MTTP. An open dialog among trainers, educators, employers, trainees, and policymakers will foster continued program success and assist with the identification and means to address programmatic challenges. To this end a [survey of participants](#) was taken, the results of which can be seen at: http://www.KwikSurveys.com/results-overview.php?surveyID=KMJKOO_6dda1247&mode=4.

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If you are interested in joining the MTTP Subcommittee—a division of the MillionTreesNYC Advisory Board designed to garner feedback and policy advice on the campaign—please contact info@milliontreesnyc.org.

Panel Discussion

The panel participants (see **Text Box** to the right) represent a diversity of experience and interests. However, each panelist emphasized the need for soft skills training, flexible workplaces, and sustained support when targeting 18 to 24 year olds who were previously disconnected from the workforce. The panel commended the MTTP for its training successes and its securing of funding support to ensure that qualified graduates are provided with post-training employment, and asserted the need for these arrangements to continue. The panel acknowledged the significant issues of multi-generational structural poverty, the shortcomings of the K-12 educational system, and often hidden but pervasive mental health problems, that challenge the target population. At the same time, job training and sustained employment can be truly transformative for the trainees.

Panel recommendations include:

- (1) Match specific resources to the needs of individual trainees. Mentorship programs and opportunities for trainees to take responsibility are effective.
- (2) Expand on mental health evaluations and the identification of mental health resources. Trainers do not have to be mental health professionals to be aware of issues and take the first step in the assessment of need. They can look for signs of problems

Panel Discussion

Panelists:

Nancy Lavan

Senior Policy Analyst for Child Welfare and Workforce Development, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA)

Dr. L'Heureux Lewis

Assistant Professor of Sociology and Black Studies, City College of New York – CUNY

Grace Protos

Regional Administrator for Region II, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau

Kathryn M. Salisbury, Ed.D., Ph.D.

Interim Chief Program Officer, Mental Health Association of New York City

Moderator:

Lilliam Barrios-Paoli

Commissioner of the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA)



The Green Jobs Panel

(Photo courtesy of Daniel Avila, NYC Department of Parks)

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and then develop an action or case management plan. MTTP should develop a wellness program that identifies available assistance and services that would be beneficial to all parties.

- (3) Behaviors of lifelong learning need to be taught and promoted among program participants. Make lessons relevant to the trainees' background and the jobs they hope to find.
- (4) Different populations and individuals have special needs. MTTP trainers need to help trainees find and focus on their strengths, mitigate literacy issues, and create affinity groups among trainees.

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Results from Breakout Sessions

Breakout groups were convened to discuss three topic areas: Supporting Economic Mobility, Workplace Issues, and Education. Each group began with a set of overarching questions to address and guide the discussion. The groups were asked to produce two lists; (1) challenges facing the green jobs training programs and the trainees themselves, and (2) potential solutions to these challenges. The final lists of Challenges and Solutions from each breakout group are presented in the text boxes to the right.

Supporting Economic Mobility

Facilitator: Lisa Hawkins

Overarching Questions:

- What are the structural and individual barriers to economic mobility?
- How can structural and individual barriers to economic mobility (such as generational poverty) be addressed in the program so that employment success of the trainees can be improved?
- How can a realistic work environment be conveyed within the training program while also providing the level of support needed to succeed in the training process?

Results from the Discussion:

Training programs involve a transformation. Although most trainees change tremendously throughout the course of the program, some may still lack the experience necessary to successfully navigate a full time job. This can be a significant barrier to success.

The breakout group identified various structural and individual barriers trainees face in moving out of poverty. These include:

CHALLENGES

Structural and individual barriers trainees face in moving out of poverty

- A variety of structural and systemic barriers exists in this population: lack of housing (including homelessness), limited transportation, childcare, documentation of identity, substance abuse, criminal histories
- Trainees often lack basic resources to participate in the program (e.g., money for childcare or transportation)
- Fear, social circle, physical and social environment, family life all can contribute to workplace difficulties
- Trainees may have little experience with budget, money, stress, time, and financial management
- Trainees may have few role models or mentors with whom they can feel comfortable and from whom they can learn by example
- Trainees may face increased competition and resentment in the workplace by current employees
- Trainees may not possess a realistic understanding of workplace dynamics, roles and the tedium of long-term goal achievement
- Trainees may not be matched to the training that best suits them
- Poor coordination within and among various agencies and NGO's can needlessly limit job opportunities

- Insufficient housing
- Childcare needs or costs that prohibit work
- Lack of access to or money for transportation
- Criminal histories or interactions with the criminal justice system
- Insufficient identification (e.g., Social Security card, birth certificate)
- Substance abuse
- Lack of money management skills
- A generally poor economy that limits employment opportunities
- Difficult living environments
- Competition or resentment in the workplace from established workers
- Lack of education
- Unclear career path (trainees are not always certain how this first position helps to fulfill their long term goals)
- Upfront costs that prohibit participating in training or the workforce (e.g., costs of paperwork filings or registrations)

MTTP can address a number of these issues with the following program improvements:

- First job training: how to stay employed as well

SOLUTIONS

- Mentors and peer groups, both during training and after, should be built to support trainees
- Green job training programs need to think in the long-term and toward new options for program graduates (e.g., entrepreneurial and cutting edge technologies, partnerships with other training programs, and leveraging resources)
- Continue to identify relevant and appropriate employers, and expand the list of possible destinations for trainees
- Beware of creating false expectations among trainees (e.g. teach that building a long-term career requires a sustained effort)
- Assessment is key to identifying barriers: identify potential issues as early as possible and find ways to address them directly
- Make sure trainees are there for the right reasons and are receiving training that is appropriate to them
- Expand the definition of "green collar" jobs to include office jobs. This would expand the list of possible employment options
- Increase collaboration within and among agencies and NGO's to identify (a) new job opportunities, and (b) support resources
- What constitutes "too much" to support in providing assistance to mitigate barriers (e.g., is providing subsidy for public transportation appropriate support)?
- Include training in budgets, money, stress, time, and financial management
- Create peer groups and mentorships that continue beyond the training period and into employment
- Formalized long-term support by creating an alumni association that can support and mentor trainees after employment

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- as how to learn from career transitions, expectations of employers, dealing with difficult work situations, daily use of soft skills
- Education: improving MTTP in specific skills needed by employers
 - Creating an awareness and understanding of potential career paths: guest speakers, professional shadowing and mentoring, site visits to workplaces, career pathway counseling, trainees as trainers, relating work to the big picture
 - Alumni: Alumni groups that can mentor trainees, support employees, and create examples of success
 - Family support through social services and advocacy groups
 - Financial literacy: basic training in financial planning, such as money management and banking
 - Support groups: Peer alumni groups that provide support and mentorship during training and beyond
-

Workplace Issues

Facilitator: Daniella Zanin-Pereira

Overarching Questions:

- Defining the specific hard skills needed to get and keep a job?
- How do you impart on jobseekers that it is not just skills and education, but also soft skills or attributes (such as pleasant attitude) that enable you to get and retain a job?
- What are the soft skills that should be emphasized?
- Naming workplace expectations for new workers.
- What resources can we provide employers to help successfully manage trainees/alumni?

Results from the Discussion:

Workplace environments and the employers that manage them typically have expectations for professional behavior and language. Yet for various reasons some trainees lack comprehensive knowledge of this behavior. MTTP must identify common workplace expectations and build them into the training program.

CHALLENGES

Attendance

- Should training programs be flexible with attendance even though the workplace is not?
- Many trainees have structural impediments to consistent attendance, including childcare issues, difficulty in long-distance public transportation, etc.
- Some people believe that training programs are not as stringent as the workplace because trainees are “untouchable” (i.e., can’t be let go), and so creates employees with unrealistic expectations

Leadership and Accountability

- Peer groups in the workplace: how can training programs prepare trainees to work better with diverse co-workers?
- Some trainees arrive at training programs without a clear sense of accountability and its importance in the workplace

Skills

- Both hard and soft skills are required to succeed in the workplace
- Employers sometimes have physical requirements for jobs. This should be addressed in the training
- Employers have minimum expectations for skills and behavior of employees

Post-Training Support

- How can trainees maintain involvement in the continuous effort required to succeed?
- Accept that some trainees will decide that green jobs are not for them

Several MTTP program improvements are key, some of which are echoed across multiple breakout groups:

- Mentorships, peer groups, and alumni groups are important for creating role models support groups for trainees. Such groups should be made available during training, but also after training to support to alumni in the workplace.
- Accountability and responsibility are common concerns. Trainees can develop leadership qualities and modes of responsible behavior by participating in a rotating team leadership during training.
- MTTP must work with agencies and NGO's to broaden the list of target employment opportunities to include office work as well as fieldwork, and to take advantage of the different strengths of individual trainees.

Employers and MTTP should develop interview techniques that correctly assess the strengths and weaknesses of applicants so appropriate work can be identified.

SOLUTIONS

- Training program attendance policy should be flexible, but include and enforce clear and reasonable limits to acceptable attendance
- Enforcement of attendance rules by trainers must be consistent
- Trainees must learn how to find employment that matches their need for flexibility and green job training programs should partner with organizations / employers that have flexible attendance policies, as was emphasized by panelists
- Employers and training programs should create different styles of interviews in order to better understand who is ready for the program
- Employers need to ask the right questions of trainees in order to get the most appropriate placement
- Have trainees alternate being a “group leader” to build sense of accountability
- Mentoring is essential, both during training and subsequent employment
- Make it relevant: training must explain how each particular skill is relevant in the workplace
- Training program staff must be aware of and communicate any physical requirements that certain jobs require
- Expand the focus of employment to aspire to and reach more diverse employers

Education

Facilitator: Brian Aucoin

Overarching Questions:

- What kind of math, writing, reading, and other skills do employers expect employees to possess?
- At what level are these skills needed for typical target employment?
- Which of these skills are least likely among trainees?
- How can MTTP get trainees without GEDs or those failed by conventional education systems up to speed?

Results from the Discussion:

Education is a core vehicle for effective pathways out of poverty and into sustainable employment. Yet many of the trainees have been failed by the state's educational system. Nevertheless, when filling jobs employers need specific qualities and skills. MTTP can better prepare trainees by identifying which skills are most desired by employers, which skills are mostly commonly lacking among trainees, and targeting appropriate corrective programs.

Specific educational soft skills are needed by trainees, including basic computer skills (e.g., word processing, the internet, use of e-mail), basic math (especially for jobs involving pesticide application) and, in some cases, language (e.g., ESL training). Some training in these skills can be included in the MTTP courses.

CHALLENGES

Training Most Needed by Trainees

- Soft skills training
- Math (for pesticide training and GED test preparation)
- “Roots of Success for Environmental Literacy” to awaken their passion

Minimum Level of Skill Required

- Minimum geometry, algebra, basic arithmetic
- Computer-based mapping skills (GoogleEarth, MapQuest, BingEarth, GIS navigation)
- Basic e-mail skills
- Basic computer and spreadsheet skills in MSWord & Excel
- Reading the newspaper (e.g., NY Times) every day
- English as a Second Language (ESL) training, if appropriate

Elements that are least common among Trainees

- Good math proficiency
- Good verbal and presentation skills

Which of these Elements can be addressed by training programs?

- Math skills courses (i.e. Math Academy through POP)
- CWI has Building Performance Institute math course that apply toward a GED

Others are available outside the MTTP curriculum (e.g., the Math Academy and ESL courses).

SOLUTIONS

- Have more reading materials on hand everyday (e.g. in vans) to encourage all types of reading-newspapers, magazines, books, field guides, etc.
- Facilitate more reading/presenting activities periodically
- POP Math Academy (math prep course for weatherization certification test) demonstrated significant results that should be transferrable to GED test prep
- After TABE test/intake interview, match trainees in need of literacy training with the appropriate resources/coaches (e.g., NY Public Library System has a number of good classes)
- Obtain and provide trainees with relevant test preparation materials (e.g., NY Botanical Garden's Pesticide Class math test prep worksheets ahead of class time so they may better prepare and maximize in-class time with instructors)
- Continue and expand opportunities for Trainees to present to each other and speak in public; attending community meetings for outreach for training program-sponsored projects and plantings
- Investigate the possibility of a sustainability/conservation curriculum recently developed for green collar job training programs for disconnected youth
- Match trainees in need to GED classes/related resources as soon as possible and help facilitate the schedule required
- Present Community College and University options to Trainees early enough to help facilitate the research and application process
- Match Trainees up to mentors in related fields and provide more opportunity for shadowing; encourage sustaining the relationship after graduation
- Implement Trainee rotations so that they are exposed to more diverse experiences and training opportunities

Appendix A: Agenda



Supporting Success: Making the Transition to Green Collar Jobs

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Ted Weiss Federal Building

290 Broadway (at Duane St.), 30th Floor, New York, NY

Symposium Agenda

8:30 am – 9:00 am	Registration & Breakfast				
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Welcome and Introductions				
9:15 am – 10:30 am	<p>Panel Discussion Featuring:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p>Nicole Lavan, Senior Policy Analyst Child Welfare and Workforce Development Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies</p> </td> <td> <p>Grace Protos Regional Administrator, Women's Bureau, Region II US Department of Labor</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p>Dr. L'Heureux Lewis Professor of Sociology & Black Studies City College of New York</p> </td> <td> <p>Kathryn Salisbury, Chief Program Officer Mental Health Association</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Moderated by: Commissioner Lilliam Barrios-Paoli Department for the Aging</p>	<p>Nicole Lavan, Senior Policy Analyst Child Welfare and Workforce Development Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies</p>	<p>Grace Protos Regional Administrator, Women's Bureau, Region II US Department of Labor</p>	<p>Dr. L'Heureux Lewis Professor of Sociology & Black Studies City College of New York</p>	<p>Kathryn Salisbury, Chief Program Officer Mental Health Association</p>
<p>Nicole Lavan, Senior Policy Analyst Child Welfare and Workforce Development Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies</p>	<p>Grace Protos Regional Administrator, Women's Bureau, Region II US Department of Labor</p>				
<p>Dr. L'Heureux Lewis Professor of Sociology & Black Studies City College of New York</p>	<p>Kathryn Salisbury, Chief Program Officer Mental Health Association</p>				
10:30 am – 10:40 am	<i>Transition to Breakout</i>				
10:40 am – 11:40 am	Breakout Group Sessions				
11:40 am – 12:00 pm	<i>Transition Period</i>				
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch (provided)				
1:00 pm – 1:45 pm	Large Group Discussion/Session Wrap-Up				
1:45 pm – 2:00 pm	<i>Transition Period</i>				
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Key Note Address: Commissioner Margarita Lopez New York City Housing Authority				
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Closing				



Appendix B: List of registrants and attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Kjirsten	Alexander	NYC Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Ellen	Arnstein	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC
Kenneth	Avenger	New York Restoration Project
Gina	Baldwin	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC
Leila	Barconey	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
David	Barker	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/PlaNYC
Martina	Barnes	US Forest Service
Nicole	Bertran	The Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills
Lindsay	Campbell	US Forest Service
John	Cannizzo	The Horticultural Society of New York
Margaret	Carmalt	Urban Resource Initiative
David	Chadwick	Prospect Park Alliance
Nicole	Colon	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Lynn	Czaporowski	Dept. of Juvenile Justice
Francisco	Davila	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC Training Program
Susan	Donoghue	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/PlaNYC
Jim	Dorvil	Consortium for Worker Education
Sarah	Frazier	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Adrienne	Fulmer	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Robert	Garafola	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Matt	Genrich	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Lisa	Hawkins	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC Training Program
Kate	Kinsey	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC Training Program
Melissa	Lee	Coalition for the Improvement of Bedford-Stuvesant
Keiron	Lindsay	Central Park Conservancy
Dexter	Locke	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/US Forest Service
David	Maddox	Sound Science LLC
David	McMaster	Bartlett Tree Experts

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Paulina	Mohamed	New York Restoration Project NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC
Morgan	Monaco	New York Botanical Garden
Kurt	Morrell	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Michael	Morrison	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC
Ethan	Mulligan	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC
Andrew	Newman	NYC Department of Youth and Community Development
Marlowe	Paraiso	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC Training Program
Bina	Patel	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Samuel	Pattison	Comprehensive Development, Inc.
Jonathan	Pereira	Coalition for the Improvement of Bedford- Stuvesant
Zuwena	Plata	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Julie	Raskin	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Cristal	Rivera	Pesticide Teaching
Paul	Roland	Altman Foundation
Karen	Rosa	Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City Prospect Park Alliance (Woodlands Youth Crew)
Jenny	Sharfstein	Prospect Park Alliance (Woodlands Youth Crew)
Tiye	Spahn	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Josh	Springer	Consortium for Worker Education
Jason	Stein	New York Restoration Project
Ophelia	Stewart	NYC Center for Economic Opportunity
Kaity	Tsui	Consortium for Worker Education
Stacey	Warady	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation/MillionTreesNYC Training Program
Gloria	Weiss	
Daniella	Zanin-Pereira	