

Will Work for Heat



Lead Organization: Opportunity Maine

Partner Organizations: Habitat for Humanity, Bath Regional Vocational Center (BRVC), AFL-CIO, Department of Labor, MaineHousing; other potential partners: ME Commission for Community Service, Chewonki Foundation; national partners: The Workforce Alliance, Green for All, United for a Fair Economy.

Community Need: Maine can resolve its looming energy and heating crisis through a bold public and private investment program that weatherizes and retrofits our homes and businesses and fosters renewable energy development and related manufacturing. However, this will not happen in a systematic, accountable way without creating the green-skilled career ladders needed to create the needed workforce. We can turn this crisis into an opportunity by linking efficiency and renewable energy investment to workforce development. While MaineHousing estimates that it could take a decade to accomplish this task, focusing on the expansion and integration of training programs into Maine's 26 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Centers could substantially speed up this development. Such an effort would directly create over 5,000 well-paying, middle-skill jobs. Creating such a bold program will require: a statewide education and engagement campaign to rally support for green jobs investment; development of a comprehensive policy that will bring in as many stakeholders as possible; and a pilot program to demonstrate the workforce partnership approach that will enable us to meet the needed capacity.

Project Activities:

- Form a community partnership pilot project to weatherize and retrofit homes in the Bath area and create a model career ladder lifting CTE students into middle- and high-skill jobs in green building, rehabilitation and retrofitting (\$45,000).
 - Beginning now and fully implemented for the 09 – 10 school year.
 - Homes and families in need but ineligible for public programs will be identified, recruited and managed by Habitat for Humanity; BRVC students will have nationally recognized certifications, credentials and eventually college credits embedded into their curriculum.
 - Work with the Labor Dept. and ME Apprenticeship Committee to create post-secondary pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities for these students to continue their education while being gainfully employed in weatherization, rehab, and retrofitting.
- Mobilize students and union members to partner with other community groups to winterize homes for families in need throughout Maine (\$5,000).
- Promote existing efficiency and training programs, as well as models from other states that took investments in green-skilled workforce development, advanced energy efficiency, and brought new energy development to scale, through a report Opportunity Maine will release at the end of this year on workforce development in Maine's new energy economy (\$14,000).
- Organize a winter conference to build understanding and support for these ideas (\$5,000).
- Conduct an online, community and campus organizing and communications campaign, including a statewide home heating needs survey, to popularize and define the notion of green jobs as they pertain to Maine's heating and energy crisis; build a statewide coalition committed to expanding this economic sector; and mobilize that coalition to educate opinion leaders, policy makers and the general public about our plan for developing the skilled workforce needed to weatherize Maine homes and businesses and develop sustainable energy sources (\$35,000).

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- Develop model legislation that will embrace the best approaches from other states to create a New Energy economy, build the green-skilled workforce it demands and meet our efficiency, energy and economic needs (\$2,000).

Outcomes / Impact: This project will:

- Transform one CTE Building Trades curriculum into a Green Builder Program and expand its educational offerings to night and weekend classes, with a potential capacity to generate 50 workers per year with certified skills in energy auditing, weatherization, and green building.
- Provide Habitat for Humanity and BRVC with the equipment package needed to train and certify students to do energy audits and weatherization projects, and create a sustainable, ongoing partnership model for the rest of the state in offering high quality, free (or greatly reduced priced) training in the community as part of the education system.
- Initiate a second pilot project in another region (Waldo County is a likely target).
- Weatherize and/or retrofit 25 homes in the Bath area for this winter; 80 homes serviced in 2009-10.
- Generate 300 volunteers statewide to plug into community winterization projects organized by church, community, student or other groups, and organize ten community educational forums on winterization/weatherization.
- Implement a public and private investment program that creates an integrated, green-skilled career ladder spanning vocational education through bachelor's degrees; weatherizes and retrofits Maine's homes and businesses in a systematic, accountable and professional manner; and spurs new energy development. This effort starts with modernizing the vocational education system to start building this skill base now.

Total Project Budget: \$250,000. Primary revenue sources: Opportunity Maine (including dedicated funding from the Betterment Fund), Habitat for Humanity, labor unions, businesses and industry associations, and several state and national foundations and philanthropists (national partners TWA, G4A and UFE are organizing national investment in this project). Primary expense items: building/weatherization materials, equipment, curriculum development and implementation for the pilot project; communications campaign including our report, conference, community education forums; policy development; staff time for managing project, pilot project training, community and campus education and outreach.

Funds Requested from the Philanthropic Sector: \$106,000 (see itemized list above).

Ability to Target Funds: Most activities can be regionally prioritized based on funder interest.

Accountability / Reporting: Opportunity Maine will disburse and track all funds. Pilot project: BRVC, MaineHousing, and the Department of Labor will ensure accountability for curriculum and training development; BRVC and Habitat for Humanity will be accountable for the work being done. The partners will develop an outcomes report for funders and for policy makers such as the ME Jobs Council, ME Apprenticeship Committee and legislators. Opportunity Maine will be directly responsible for all other work described.

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