

THE ALACHUA COUNTY EMPOWER PROJECT

Energy Modernization for People, Opportunity, Work, Equity, and Renewables

December 12, 2023



- The EMPOWER Project was inspired by a 2021 countywide event sponsored by the NAACP Environmental & Climate Justice Committee (ECJC) forum focused on transitioning to 100% clean energy
- In 2022, the EMPOWER team applied for and won an award from the United States Department of Energy (DOE) Local Energy Action Program (LEAP) Grant to develop a pilot plan to achieve this
- EMPOWER was selected as one of 24 communities (the only one in Florida) and is receiving technical assistance from the DOE and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) for Technical assistance through March 2024

<https://www.energy.gov/communitiesLEAP/communities-leap>

ABOUT COMMUNITIES LEAP



- The Communities LEAP program aims to facilitate sustained community-wide economic empowerment
- This opportunity is specifically open to low-income, energy-burdened communities that are also experiencing either direct environmental justice impacts, or direct economic impacts from a shift away from historical reliance on fossil fuels.
- The EMPOWER Project focuses on three local communities:
 - Springhill/Sugarhill
 - Greater Duval
 - SWAG

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING EMPOWER PROJECT



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GOALS



WEATHERIZATION

- Create a plan for expanding weatherization services
- Home repairs and upgrades to save money & improve health
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

SOLAR

- Explore the potential for solar projects to benefit EMPOWER neighborhoods
- Local energy projects that provide green jobs opportunities

GREEN JOBS

- Develop best practices for creating and sustaining a green workforce
- Jobs in clean energy, energy efficiency, and other emerging areas accessible to underserved populations

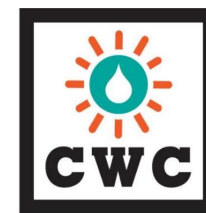
LEADERSHIP

- Community collaboration to reduce energy burdens and increase resilience while creating greater community equity and economic opportunities



EXPANDED WEATHERIZATION BENEFITS

- Lower utility bills and costs
- Improve the livability & comfort of homes
- Increase home & community value
- Increase neighborhood stability & lower gentrification'
- Increase resilience to climate change
- Improve home health and health outcomes
- New job opportunities in the growing green economy



COMMUNITY
WEATHERIZATION
COALITION

Saving money and
resources, together.



WEATHERIZATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Organized monthly Weatherization Coordination meetings that bring together local weatherization service providers;
- Identified bottlenecks in the provision of services provision;
- Created guide to help residents seeking weatherization services;
- Created Weatherization Technician Certification modules at Santa Fe College.

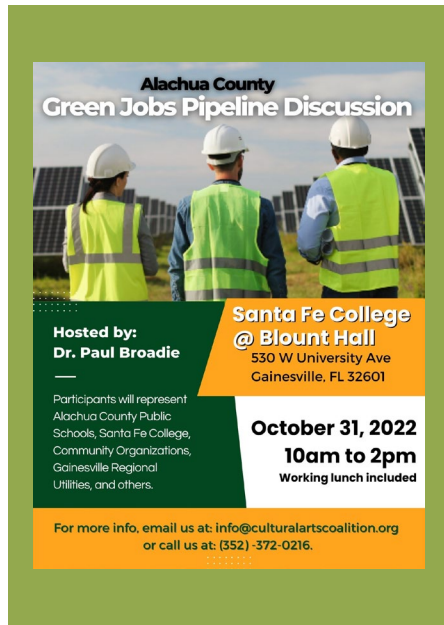


Saving money and
resources, together.



CREATING A GREEN JOBS PIPELINE IN OUR COMMUNITY

By designing an effective program, we will effectively be creating a local market for new green jobs and new businesses.



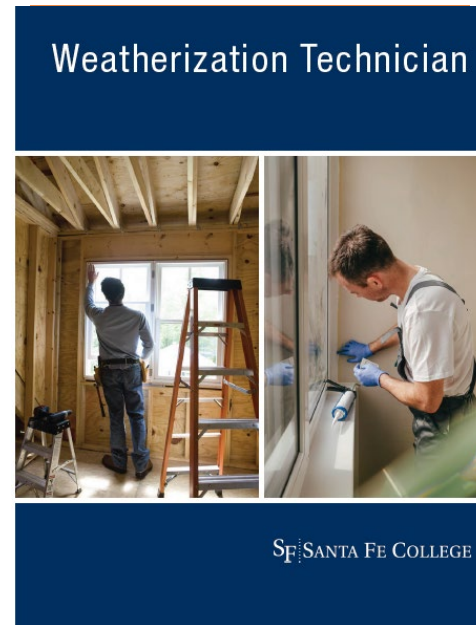
Green Jobs Pipeline Discussion

Attended by over 60 workforce specialists and community members



Green Jobs Advisory Council

Meeting monthly since December 2022



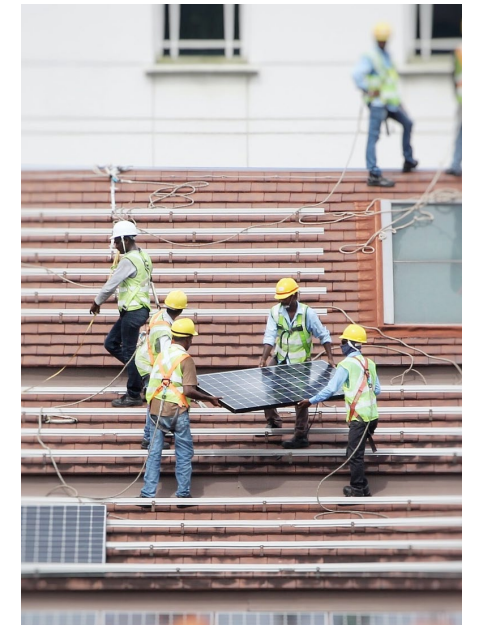
Santa Fe College

Expanding its vocational programs for green economy jobs, and partnering with communities to demonstrate work in practice



Public Schools

Introducing educational programs and introductory coursework related to the green economy



Benefits

Creating a green job pipeline will provide great jobs, environmental protection, entrepreneurial opportunities, and community economic development

GREEN JOBS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New Santa Fe program
Starting October 2023

Plans to increase awareness and access through community events, schools and other venues



Weatherization Technician

NEW! Wood and Masonry Construction Methods
Module ID 33102-10; from Electronic Systems Technician Level One: Reviews the materials and techniques used in constructing and finishing residential and commercial buildings, including wood frame, brick and block, and post and beam. Covers common drills, bits, and techniques used to drill through wood and masonry. Also describes types of fasteners used with these materials.

BUSxxxx.xxx
Oct. 24 & 26, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
FEE \$598 | 12 hours

NEW! Thermal and Moisture Protection
Module ID 59103-07; from Carpentry Level Two: Covers the selection and installation of insulating materials in walls, floors, and ceilings. Explains the uses and installation practices and waterproofing materials.

4 p.m.
12 hours

NEW! Sealing the Building Envelope
Module ID 59102-10: Describes how to correct heat losses and gains by applying insulating materials to uninsulated areas of the building envelope. Describes how to reduce air infiltration by applying caulks and other materials. Also explains how to patch drywall and install weatherstripping.

BUSxxxx.xxx
Nov. 7, 9, 14, 16, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
FEE \$1,196 | 24 hours

NEW! Insulating Pipes, Ducts, and Water Heaters
Module ID 59103-10: Describes how to insulate water pipes and water heaters, and explains how to make simple duct system repairs, seal air leaks in a duct system, and insulate ducts to reduce heat loss.

BUSxxxx.xxx
Dec. 5 & 7, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
FEE \$598 | 12 hours

Internships available through CareerSource



CAREERS IN GREEN JOB INDUSTRY

WHAT ARE GREEN CAREERS ?

Green careers are those that focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility.



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF GREEN CAREERS?



RENEWABLE ENERGY JOBS



SUSTAINABILITY OFFICERS



TRADITIONAL JOB WITH "GREEN" ALTERNATIVES

SOME EXAMPLES OF GREEN JOBS ?



SOLAR PANEL INSTALLER



HYDROLOGIST



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE SPECIALIST



SOLAR POWER & COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Solar, or photovoltaics (PV), converts sunlight into electricity.
Solar is now the lowest cost way to produce electricity in almost every part of the world (including Florida).



Rooftop Solar – Individual Benefits

Solar is owned by the homeowner and can reduce their electricity bills to almost zero – but does not benefit others in the community
Low-income loans are difficult to secure.

Community Solar Benefits

Installing leased solar power on institutional buildings provides resources for a Community Fund that can support weatherization and green jobs benefits for 30 years



Springhill
Neighborhood
Association



HOW WILL THIS BE PAID FOR?

- **Build on Existing Programs**

Expand GRU, CWC and other local/regional programs that provide weatherization and electrification services

- **Access NEW Funding Opportunities for green jobs, weatherization, and solar**

Justice40, Inflation Reduction Act

Home Rebates up to \$14,000

Solar & Electric Vehicle Rebates

LEAP, HeroX, and other programs to kick-start innovative community solutions

- **New grants being solicited (ranging from \$50,000 to \$35.7million)**

- **LEAP Communities (Phase 1 received; Phase 2 in preparation)**
- **Jobs for the Future Quality Green Jobs Regional Challenge (received; Phase 2 in preparation)**
- DOE Community Power Accelerator grants (submitted)
- Buildings Upgrade prize for weatherization, EPA Solar for All (not received)
- Community Energy Innovation Prize, EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Plans, EPA Community Change Grants (upcoming)



THE EMPOWER COALITION CONTINUES ITS WORK

We are building a strong coalition of community partners, led by the community, to continue to work together to address these pressing

Springhill Neighborhood Association



CareerSource
NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA