

Greening of California's Workforce

A Position Paper
Generated with the Input of
Regional Workforce and Education Leaders
At Citrus College
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Executive Summary

California needs jobs. Our unemployment rate is the highest in the nation with no significant relief in sight.

California needs Green. The pollution of our air, water, and land is reaching catastrophic levels.

California needs Green Jobs. By addressing the unemployment issue in an environmentally productive manner, we have the opportunity to address our two largest problems at the same time.

Green jobs are those in the energy or conservation sectors, jobs that use environmentally sound methods and materials, or jobs with a sustainable outcome. Green jobs require training and education, but our educational system is threatened with the largest budget cuts in history.

Solutions to these looming challenges are urgent, and they are not simple. They will require multifaceted approaches by our legislators, educators, and business and industry. The solutions will require all of us. Educators, employers, and legislators must partner together and share their energy, their expertise, and their funding. Solutions will involve new ways of thinking, new partnerships, and leveraging of resources.

Background

California Needs Jobs

In June of 2009, according to the Employment Development Department, 16,374,500 Californians were unemployed. At 11.9%, this is the highest unemployment rate in the nation.¹

The state has the fourth-highest housing foreclosure rate in the nation, has lost more businesses than any state in recent years, is facing a \$40 billion deficit, and the economic situation is only likely to get worse.²

California Needs Green

California produces roughly 1.4 percent of the world's, and 6.2 percent of the total U.S., greenhouse gases. Our state has been working on and finding solutions to our impact on climate since 1988. Governor Schwarzenegger's 2005 executive order on climate change emphasized the mandate to advance clean renewable energy and to find other solutions to lower our state's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The landmark California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 established the first-in-the-world comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of GHG.³

California Needs Green Jobs

Between 1998 and 2007, Green Jobs grew at a national rate of 9.1 percent while traditional jobs grew by only 3.7 percent. By 2007, more than 68,200 businesses across all 50 states and the District of Columbia accounted for more than 770,000 jobs, despite a lack of sustained government support in the past decade.⁴

At a summit in Philadelphia in the spring of 2009, Vice President Joe Biden said people who make \$20 per hour before participating in a Green Jobs training program can make \$50 per hour after completing a program. On average, the clean-energy jobs pay 10 to 20 percent more than similar work outside the field, he said. Adding to the enthusiasm, Biden cited a recent case in Chicago where a maker of energy-efficient windows intends to gradually rehire 250 workers who were laid off when their window company closed late last year.⁵

Federal and state lawmakers also see the Green Job sector as helping to spur America's economic recovery and protect the environment. States will receive a major infusion of federal funds through the recently enacted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Every state offers some form of financial incentive to drive its clean energy economy.⁶

Green Jobs Require Training and Education

In some cases, Green training can be quick, such as providing information on Green technology for incumbent workers already in the field. At other times, Green Jobs necessitate rigorous educational programs in order to prepare the student with basic knowledge together with Green technology skills, sustainable methods, and energy efficient design skills.

California has the educational institutions. Newly tabulated attendance data indicate that student enrollments at California's 110 community colleges are surging at a dramatic rate. Reports submitted by the colleges to the State Chancellor's Office show that enrollments are up at 103 of the state's 110 community colleges. Statewide, enrollments have increased by 6.4 percent, or over 150,000 students, compared to last year.⁷ The California Community Colleges are the largest system of higher education in the world.⁸ The first line of their mission statement is "The California Community Colleges shall, as a primary mission, offer academic and vocational instruction..."⁹ and the state inventory shows 261 separate categories of career and technical education.¹⁰

In September 2005 Senator Jack Scott's Vocational Education legislation, SB 70, was chaptered into the Education Code section 88532. The bill focuses on improving the linkages and career-technical pathways between high school and California Community Colleges. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has designed a supporting project called Statewide Career Pathways: Creating School to College Articulation.¹¹

California's Budget Crisis has Impacted Education

State education officials say the current budget cuts threaten recent gains in raising test scores and closing a persistent achievement gap between black and Latino students and their white and Asian counterparts.¹²

California's Community Colleges are facing a historic downsizing in the proposed 2009-2010 budget. The budget would remove funding for between 140,000 and 175,000 full-time students on top of the 50,000 currently being served without funding. However, no federal funds appear to be proposed for California's community colleges, which are key to our economic recovery. The California Community Colleges have been belt-tightening for years. Community colleges receive one-half of the funding California State University receives per student and one-third the funding University of California receives.¹³

Recommendations

California can help our schools prepare the necessary Green Workforce.

1. California must enact policies and programs to drive investments into targeted Green economic activity and increase demand for local Green Jobs. This includes making Green Jobs a priority for California, providing regulatory relief that reduces bureaucracy for employers, and offering incentives for employers who provide Green Jobs.
2. California needs to create a sustainable budget that supports Green Education, facilities, and grant funding, and develop a clearing house for Green resources.
3. California can promote Green Jobs by networking with businesses and encouraging the sharing of best Green Practices, by promoting Green Literacy in young people, and by creating a Green Report Card.

Education and industry leaders can work together to prepare students for Green Jobs.

1. Education and industry leaders must partner to expand a global vision, identify and define Green Jobs, and connect education to real jobs.
2. Education and industry leaders can re-tool existing educational programs and develop new Green Curricula with hands-on experience, create Green Career K-16 to Industry Pathways, and promote education to industry.
3. Education and industry leaders can secure state and federal grants for cost effective Green Programs and support.
4. Education and industry leaders must educate our communities on the need for Green Jobs to strengthen our economy and protect California's natural resources.
5. Education and industry leaders can develop a system that can track where resources have made the most significant impacts and can point to successful results.
6. Education and industry leaders can approach new Green instructional programs in a geographically strategic way, so that programs are accessible where they need to be and don't compete with other similar programs.

Citrus College can be innovative in preparing students for Green Jobs, even with the current reduced funding in California's economy today.

1. Citrus College can partner with middle schools for Green Career exploration, partner with high schools and ROPs to develop Green Career Pathways from secondary to college, partner with businesses to offer work experience, guaranteed interviews, and ties to entry level jobs with Green employers, and

partner with community based organizations and worksource centers to leverage resources.

2. Citrus College can re-tool existing educational programs and develop new Green Curricula with hands-on experience, create Green Career Pathways, target distance education for Green Career programs, and offer satellite locations for off-campus Green Career classes.
3. Citrus College can analyze existing Green Research, access mentor retirees, and contain costs to make progress accessible and affordable to students including displaced workers.
4. Citrus College can demonstrate accountability by tracking outcomes, successes, Green Jobs needed, and Green Jobs filled.

The K-12 system can reach parents and students to prepare them for Green Career Pathways

1. The K-12 system can help students and parents understand Green Technology and Green Careers through integrating Green aspects across the curriculum, provide Green Exploration activities in early grades, establish a common language on what "Green" means, translate teachings in multiple languages, and create Green Career Fairs hosted by PTAs that show high paying Green Jobs and Pathways in partnership with local community colleges and industry.
2. The K-12 system can allow students to learn "Green" by student generated content, podcasting, Twitter, producing a 30-minute cable show, participating in a joint K-14 newsletter, and other student involvement.
3. The K-12 system can identify student interests and corresponding Green Career Pathways, and articulate with Citrus College Green Career Pathways.

Summary

California is facing a **crisis of resources**, both natural resources and fiscal resources. Preparing a Green Workforce can begin to reverse the calamities of environment and budgets and reestablish California's robust economy.

Despite the serious challenges that our state is facing, there are **partnerships** and resources that can support the development of California's Green Workforce. Strong partnerships among **educators, employers, and legislators** can create **Green Career Pathways** that lead to real jobs for candidates who have been trained in industry standards on current technology.

We must **identify** Green Jobs, **support** Green Jobs, **educate for** Green Jobs, **advocate for** Green Jobs, and **track** Green Jobs. Legislation and funding will enable the key partnerships to accomplish these worthy and imperative goals.

Citations

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<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123336500319935517.html>

³ California Environmental Protection Agency, <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/>

⁴ Pew Charitable Trust, http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_detail.aspx?id=690

⁵ CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/02/25/green.jobs.training/>

⁶ Pew Charitable Trust, http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_detail.aspx?id=690

⁷ California Community College Chancellor's Office, www.cccco.edu

⁸ California Colleges, <http://www.californiacolleges.edu/>

⁹ California Education Code Section 66010.4 (a)

¹⁰ California Community Colleges Taxonomy of Programs, Sixth Edition, February 2004

¹¹ Statewide Career Pathways: Creating School to College Articulation,
<http://www.statewidepathways.org/about.html>

¹² Budget Crisis Forces Deep Cuts at California Schools, June 21, 2009, By TERENCE CHEA
<http://apnews.myway.com/article/20090621/D98V7T001.html>

¹³ California Community College League, www.ccleague.org

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