

December 5, 2009

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**CHICAGO TO USE \$7.425 MILLION IN ECONOMIC STIMULUS FUNDS TO
EXPAND GREEN JOBS ACROSS CITY**
*Nearly 300 New Community-based Jobs for the Hard-to-employ, Including
the Formerly Incarcerated*

Mayor Richard M. Daley today announced that the City of Chicago will use \$7.425 million in funds received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to create nearly 300 community-based green jobs for the hard-to-employ, including the formerly incarcerated over the next two years.

“Our residents are struggling under the most painful economy we have experienced in 70 years. Too many people are out of work. Too few jobs are being created. People are forced to use their savings -- if they're lucky enough to have some -- just to keep their homes or to pay their bills,” said Mayor Daley during a press conference at the City's Household Chemicals & Computer Recycling Facility, 1150 N. North Branch Street.

“As a city we must lead by example. As leaders it's our shared responsibility to help those in need.”

The City will use these funds to support two new green job training initiatives: the Green Job Work Experience and Community Green Jobs. Both programs were developed by the City and its non-profit and business partners. The City will distribute the funds to 11 delegate agencies that will facilitate these initiatives. These organizations were selected based on two competitive requests for proposals that were issued in August.

Green Job Work Experience

The Green Jobs Work Experience initiative will train 190 hard-to-employ individuals including formerly incarcerated Chicagoans to work in the environment sector. It will also support approximately 20 supervisors, trainees, and administrative staff to work over the course of two years through two programs.

The first program is the existing Greencorps Chicago program which will grow to 60 participants in 2010 and 80 in 2011 up from 40 in 2009.

Started in 1994, Greencorps has served more than 300 hard-to-employ Chicagoans and thousands of community gardeners by providing training programs in waste reduction, pollution prevention, community horticulture and sustainable landscaping. The program has recently expanded into home weatherization, electronics recycling, tree care, and computer recycling.

The Greencorps program will be administered by WRD Environmental with a team including OAI, Inc., Signature Staffing, Safer Foundation, and Fuller Park Community Development Corporation. These partners are bringing more than \$1 Million dollars in leveraged funds through the Wal-Mart Foundation, Fry Foundation, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), USEPA and tax incentives.

The second program will support 25 participants per year in a similar year-round program with the Safer Foundation, Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance and the New Communities Program at LISC. The Safer Foundation participants will work primarily in the Garfield Park Community and will focus on ex-offenders re-entering that community.

Community Green Jobs

The Community Green Jobs initiative will employ 80 hard-to-employ individuals to work by funding job placements in green businesses that help to promote energy efficiency, reduced waste and pollution through recycling, community greening and other green initiatives.

Agencies being funded include those involved in manufacturing sustainable products from recycled materials; local agriculture; waste removal, reduction and recycling; tree care and horticulture; energy efficiency and other related industries.

The Community Green Jobs funding will help these agencies leverage dollars and strengthen their programs. Recipients of the Community Green Jobs funding include:

- CobConnection - will create up to 10 jobs that address urban heat islands through urban agriculture & tree planting;
- Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation - will create up to 10 jobs to expand their existing Litter Free Zone recycling program;
- Growing Home - will create up to 10 jobs in their organic urban agriculture job training program;
- Growing Power - will create up to 6 jobs in an organic urban agriculture & composting job training program;
- Heartland Human Care Services - will create up to 10 jobs in their WomanCraft program that makes paper products from recycled paper;
- The Inner City Muslim Action Network - will create up to 10 positions that will work on energy efficiency upgrades to foreclosed buildings to create transitional housing;

- The LEED Council - will create up to 10 jobs in an energy efficiency job training program;
- The North Lawndale Employment Network and its partners - will create 8 positions in a year round hydroponics and urban agriculture training program; and
- St Leonard's House - will create 6 jobs to perform energy efficiency retrofits of St Leonard's facilities.

These programs will begin on January 1, 2010.

Participants in the Green Job Work Experience programs will work at least 1200 paid hours per year (30 hours per week for 40 weeks) and participants in the Community Green Jobs initiative will work at least 1500 paid hours per year (30 hours per week for 50 weeks).

All participants will receive technical job skills and academic training, social and life services support, and job placement assistance. Wages vary based on position but are between \$8 and \$10.50 per hour plus 40% for payroll taxes, workman's compensation, FICA, health insurance and other benefits.

"These new jobs will contribute to the economic prosperity that will come as we meet the goals of the Chicago Climate Action Plan and improve the quality of life for the trainees as well as the communities across Chicago," said Environment Commissioner, Suzanne Malec-McKenna.

The Mayor pointed out that every year, formerly incarcerated individuals return to Chicago having paid their debt to society and are looking forward to moving forward with their lives. Oftentimes they either have difficulty finding steady employment or don't have the resources to learn the skills they need to get a job

"Some people may ask why we are funding a program that benefits ex-offenders. We offer these programs to improve our city's quality of life. We're not looking to give someone a handout," said Mayor Daley. "We have to continue to work hard to break the cycle that puts our young men and women on the path to destruction and despair if we expect our crime rate to decrease. It's vital that these individuals rebuild their lives, connect with their families, find meaningful employment and become useful members of society.

"By investing in our green job programs, we are not only helping those in need get back on track, we are improving the quality of life in our city by conserving and protecting our environment for future generations."

For more information on these programs please call 312-746-9777.

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